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**Caymanianness, History, Culture, Tradition, and Globalisation: Assessing the Dynamic Interplay
Between Modern and Traditional(ist) Thought in the Cayman Islands**

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Declaration

No portion of the work referred to in this dissertation has been submitted in support of an application for another degree or qualification of this or any other university or other institute of learning.

ABSTRACT

The research undertaken for this largely qualitative dissertation draws on newspaper articles, oral histories, historical documentation, open-ended interviews, and to a lesser extent, questionnaires, in the effort to ultimately confirm the extent to which the benefitting forces of globalization have fractured any existing traditional-historical cultural body of knowledge and expression among the Caymanian people. Indeed, by 2009 some Caymanians had long been verbally denouncing the social and cultural ills of globalization – inclusive of multiculturalism – on their so-called traditional, unassuming way of life, some of them clamoring for an extensive purge of the many foreign nationals in “their” Cayman Islands. Yet, other Caymanians have become somewhat invested in the idea of multicultural “oneness” ostensibly for the sake of peaceful coexistence, harmony and prosperity as these work towards the promotion of a global, borderless cultural awareness.

This dissertation relies on theoretical frames centred both on the discrete natures of, and the dualistic struggle between, these two opposing ideological-cultural forces. That this struggle is taking place in the present age, I anticipate the ways in which more modern understandings, which are potentially open to liberating subjectivities, must clash with “historical”, xenophobic and nationalistic viewpoints, viewpoints which have constantly proven contradictory given their adherents’ complacent acceptance of, and participation in, a localised economic prosperity substantively dependent on foreign input. Thus in aggregate terms, this dissertation pinpoints the various effects of an evolving scheme of values and counter-values on an ideologically torn Caymanianness whose contradictory traditional half is especially fighting for its “cultural purity” in an era where *its* ‘reinvented’ logic is being more and more regarded as anachronistic and somewhat irrational.

Abbreviations

CINA Cayman Islands National Archives, Cayman Islands

CO Colonial Office Document

ESO Employment and Statistics Office, Cayman Islands

HMSO Her Majesty's Stationary Office

MLA Member of the Legislative Assembly

PPM People's Progressive Movement

PRO Public Records Office, England

UDP United Democratic Movement

CDP Christian Democratic Party

KYD Cayman Islands Dollar

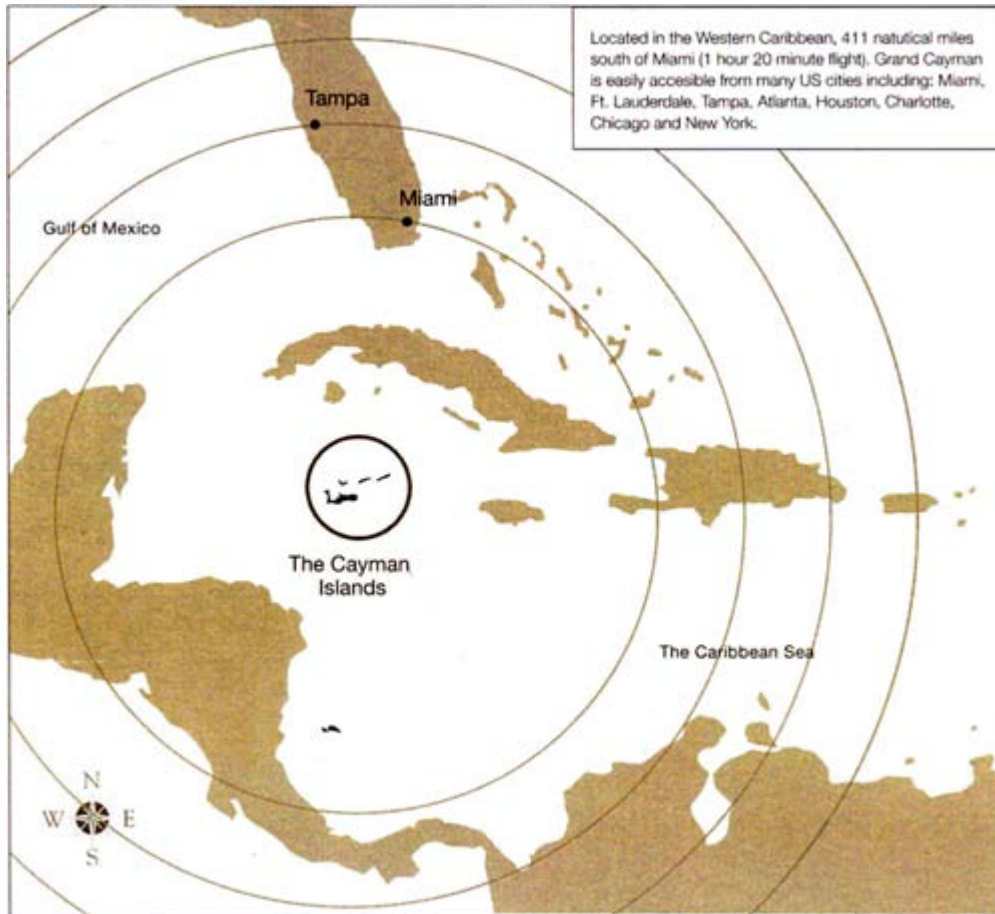
Flag and Maps



Source: www.flagsofinformation.com



Source: www.lonelyplanet.com



Source: www.residencerentals-cayman.com

SECTION 1

INTRODUCTION AND LITERATURE REVIEW

Will the Caymanian identity disappear? Will Caymanian identity become anyone who lives here? A lot of people here who claim to be Caymanian have just settled here. They don't understand. (Mark, quoted in Amit 2001, p. 586).

The Cayman Islands comprise the low lying limestone islands of Grand Cayman, Cayman Brac and Little Cayman (the latter two islands are hereafter referred to as the sister islands, and all three islands are often referred to as Cayman). Cayman is a prosperous British Dependency that is located in the western Caribbean; the islands lie 195 miles to the northwest of Jamaica and 180 miles to the south of Cuba, and have a combined land mass of roughly 100 square miles.

The flag of the Cayman Islands depicts the islands' continued status as a British Dependency as symbolized in the placement of the Union Jack in the upper hoist quadrant of the flag; the symbol of the British Lion within the upper half of the Caymanian Coat of Arms, located to the right of the Union Jack, confirms this relationship. A pineapple crowns the Coat of Arms, signifying Cayman's historical relationship with British Jamaica (the pineapple remains a national symbol of Jamaica which achieved its independence from the United Kingdom in 1962), while the turtle on which it rests represents Cayman's seafaring tradition. The intertwined blue and white chord which supports the turtle symbolizes another important commodity of traditional Caymanian life – the indigenous silver palm – that was

used to make sturdy roping and other products like slippers (also known as wompers), brooms, roofing, and so on. Within the Coat of Arms, below the British Lion, the Cayman Islands are represented in the formation of three evenly placed stars as situated in the Caribbean Sea which is symbolized by a backdrop of intertwining blue and white – the waves and their cresting surf. The words HE HATH FOUNDED IT UPON THE SEAS are found in Psalms 24 and, in scroll, complete the Coat of Arms, confirming both Cayman's Christian and seafaring heritage.

**

Of all the English-speaking Caribbean countries, Cayman has perhaps received the scantest of scholarly attention where history, culture, and identity are concerned. An important reason for such an oversight on the part of professional historians, I suggest, can be located within the annals of Caribbean history, where three negligibly fertile islands of the northwest Caribbean were never able to contribute effectively to the economy generated by imperialism, and particularly by plantation agriculture and enslaved and indentured labour. In this sense, Cayman's historical trajectory offers few obvious signposts to the Caribbean cultural historian seeking to compare the social and cultural historical developments of Caymanians with those of other Caribbean nationalities, especially those of the British West Indies. Additionally, slave rebellions and race riots like those witnessed in Jamaica, Dominica, and St. Kitts, among other islands, did not occur in Cayman. This leads us

both to question the extent of Cayman's insularity, isolation, and "slave status" during systematic colonialism and to anticipate the telling of a somewhat atypical historical process – at least in relation to much of the British West Indies – which provides the basis for one of the most vibrant financial centres in the world.

The scholarly process by which such a question and its concomitant anticipation are to be truly appreciated has been sluggish: to date only a handful of scholarly books on the history and sociology of the Cayman Islands and their people have been published. Apart from these works, what little information on the Cayman Islands, historical or otherwise, that has been published in otherwise illuminating works on the Caribbean and its history has been limited, as is the case with historians Barry Higman and Gad Heuman and well known Antiguan diplomat Sir Ronald Sanders. Higman, for instance, oversimplifies the economic history of the Cayman Islands when he asserts that these islands were wholly dependent on the export of turtle throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.¹ Similarly, Heuman's claim that the Cayman Islands are at present too small and vulnerable to even consider independence is open to challenge;² present here is the unawareness that regardless

¹ Barry Higman, *Slave Populations of the British Caribbean, 1807-1834* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1st edition), p. 49.

² Gad Heuman, *The Caribbean: Brief Histories* (London: Hodder Headline Group, 2006), p. 67.

of their British Dependency status, the Cayman Islands, through its services economy, has, per capita, one of the highest GDP outputs in the world.³

Similarly, Sanders likens present-day Cayman to much of the Caribbean in regard to disaster insurance in the wake of Hurricane Ivan in 2004: 'disaster insurance is extensive in the United States', he begins, '... [but] less commonplace in developing countries and rudimentary at best in the Caribbean.'⁴ Although the Cayman Islands received no financial aid from Britain after Hurricane Ivan devastated Grand Cayman, two years after the event most insured Caymanians had received their insurance payments, and all identified uninsured Caymanians were being given fairly extensive financial aid by the government – a noticeable contrast to the post Hurricane Katrina crisis in New Orleans in 2005.⁵ Indeed, Heuman, more so than Sanders, has failed to see what Tony Thorndike recognized in 1989: 'There is no doubt that...Bermuda, [the] Cayman Islands and Montserrat⁶ ... could sustain

³ Based on information provided by the *CIA World Factbook*, <http://www.umsl.edu/services/govdocs/wofact2005/geos/cj.html>, May 17, 2005; July 12, 2009.

⁴ Sir Ronald Sanders, *Crumpled Small: The Commonwealth Caribbean in World Politics* (London: Hansib, 2005), p. 31.

⁵ It should be noted, however, that after Hurricane Ivan, and in spite of Britain's refusal to give Cayman any financial aid, the wider European Union granted Cayman \$7.47 million Cayman Islands Dollars (KYD); it was only by April of 2009, however, that the final payment was given. Considering that Ivan caused damages to the amount of roughly US\$3.4 billion, any further financial funding was generated by the islands' economy. For verification of the above figures, see, for instance, 'Emergency Official Pleads for Preparedness', in *Cayman Net News*, <http://www.caymannetnews.com/cgi-script/csArticles/articles/000143/014365.htm>, May 8, 2007; July 13, 2009; Norma Connolly, 'No EU [Hurricane] Paloma funds requested', in the *Caymanian Compass*, <http://www.caycompass.com/cgi-bin/CFPnews.cgi?ID=10381870>, April 23, 2009; July 13, 2009.

⁶ In 1995, Montserrat's Soufriere Hill volcano violently erupted, precipitating the exodus of two-thirds of the island's residency, and effectively disrupting its tourism and agricultural industries; because of this condition, Montserrat has had to depend on the UK for monetary aid to the present, and so can

independence [but have not done so because] they are suspicious of change.’⁷ Casual readers who are introduced to Cayman by way of such limited insights are likely to accept them without question, and ultimately, such misunderstandings have eclipsed the historicity of an evolving and dynamic Caymanian cultural-cum-nationalist discursive framework in the present and the ideological junctures at which local sentiment breaks with the past. I explore these issues below.

This study therefore has three intentions. The first is concerned with providing a historical foundation for Caymanianness, where this concept depends on this essential question: “Who is a Caymanian?” I use Caymanianness throughout this study in a similar way that Mette Louise Berg uses Cubanness, ‘...that is, [as] a new way of answering the question of who the “we” of a nation are.’⁸ (I provide a more in-depth definition for this term in Section 3.2.2). The social-historical background which comprises this concern thus necessarily entails a relatively detailed assessment of what I have classified as the six phases of Cayman history, although I deal only with the first five phases here (as an aside, given that most of phase six takes place in the first six decades of the twentieth century, I am especially interested in assessing the historicity of traditional Caymanian recollections in this phase, and

no longer be included in the list of British Dependencies that are able to generate and sustain their own economies.

⁷ Tony Thorndike, ‘The Future of the British Caribbean Dependencies’, in the *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs*, vol. 31, no. 3 (1989), p. 118.

⁸ Mette Louise Berg, ‘Localising Cubanness: Social Exclusion and Narratives of Belonging in Old Havana’, in *Caribbean Narratives of Belonging: Field of Relations, Sites of Identity*, edited by Jean Besson and Karen Fog Olwig. (Oxford: Macmillan Education, 2005), p. 133.

so, phase six, in the main, establishes my second intention). This historical assessment, located in the study's second section, proves important in the sense that it introduces and assesses the social origins of a Caymanian psychical state still in development. In addition to mapping the islands' historical developments from 1503 to the 1880s, I especially demonstrate that Grand Cayman was an authentic slave society, thereby revealing a legitimate contrast to that line of thought that refuses to acknowledge the indispensability of slavery and the racist, racialist notions associated with it in Cayman's historical development.

My second and third intentions are interconnected, and, in aggregate, prove far more sweeping than the first. The second intention begins in Section 3, which comprises a series of assessments of the historicity of various Caymanian traditional sentiments based on the recollections of older Caymanians. I define traditional – or time-honoured – sentiment here as comprising '[any]...statement, belief or practice [that can be]...transmitted (especially orally) from generation to generation.'⁹ I strive to determine the ways in which such long-established sentiments, symbolic of a lived past, indeed resonate with younger Caymanians perhaps more inclined to modern thoughts and practices. Section 3 concludes with an assessment of the evolution of once favourable traditional Caymanian understandings of Jamaicans and Jamaica as that nation began to decline into gang violence and political and

⁹ Quoted in Mark Sedgwick, *Against the Modern World: Traditionalism and the Secret Intellectual History of the Twentieth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), p. 19.

economic instability not long after its independence from Great Britain. This evolution of Caymanian thought is important in modern terms when it is considered that from 1655 to 1959 the Cayman Islands were dependencies of British Jamaica, yet by the 1970s, many financially ailing Jamaicans found themselves, via the modern process of globalisation, in a more prosperous Cayman in search of work. My understanding of the modern concept, that is, modernity – in which is enshrined the practical idea that a contemporary sensibility with its emphasis on choice and progressiveness is fundamentally different from an antecedent, fixed, static traditional equivalent – refers largely to its ‘common-sense’ usage, which can relate to statements, beliefs, and practices that are rooted in the immediate, or recent, present and their concomitantly progressive logic which strives to understand and *represent* human existence in the present and not necessarily in accordance with the traditional order which tends to rely on the perceived purity and unity of the recent and/or ancient cultural past;¹⁰ indeed, not only am I aware that there is a

¹⁰ Many scholars agree that the inchoate practicalities of modernity were visible by the mid to late seventeenth century as the Scientific Revolution took hold of Europe and secular intellectualism pervaded almost every aspect of society across that region. Nonetheless, there are competing ‘modern’ visions of modernity that depart from Emile Durkheim’s classic understanding of modernity as a decidedly collective movement in which shared values and beliefs work to bring nationals together. Jurgen Habermas, for instance, holds that modernity ‘ought’ to represent a moral, utopian vision that, *inter alia*, works to consolidate those that subscribe to an equality-based universal creed free of class struggle; Marshall Berman, on the other hand, like Stuart Hall, takes a less abstract approach, choosing instead to see modernity, or indeed *postmodernity*, as unfolding in the ‘here and now’ and functioning on ethical and sensory perceptions that defy a single universal creed for the promotion of the equality of difference. Given the empirical nature of this study, I am more inclined to identify with Berman’s vision of modernity. For a critique of the foregoing philosophers, see especially Scott Lash and Jonathan Friedman, ‘Introduction: Subjectivity and Modernity’s Other’, in *Modernity and Identity*, edited by Scott Lash and Jonathan Friedman (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992), pp.1-30. See also Emile Durkheim *et al.*, *Primitive Classifications* (London: Cohen and West, 1913); Jurgen Habermas, *Theory of Communicative Action*, vol.1 (Cambridge: Policy Press, 1984); Marshall Berman, *All that Is Solid Melts into Air: The Experience of Modernity* (London: Verso, 1988, 2nd edition); Stuart

modernizing process behind the social present and its economic and cultural logic, but I am also mindful that certain traditionalist sentiments in the present are *themselves* modern inventions to a great extent and I look at these important concepts and counter-concepts in due course.

Inversely, then, given the influence of globalisation in the Cayman Islands and its modern underpinnings, the third intention is introduced in the study's final section, which further defines modern Caymanian ideologies, subsequently juxtaposing these with *their* traditional equivalents as assessed in the previous section. The comparison of modern and traditional Caymanian thinking patterns provides the bases for original analyses that will foreshadow the ways in which incoming foreign forces – be it the overwhelming numerical presence of expatriates of any nationality, or an incoming anti-traditional popular cultural ideology – have either developed, empowered, influenced, or conflicted with local strains of traditional and modern cultural and nationalist expressions and sentiments.

Thus the arguments of my study ultimately hinge on what I term a cultural-nationalist oppositional sentimental framework. In other words, it is my contention that some Caymanians are more modern in their cultural and national outlooks, while other Caymanians seem to be more bound by tradition and history and the potential xenophobic,

Hall, Introduction, in *Formations of Modernity: An Introduction to Modern Societies*, edited by Stuart Hall *et al.* (Malden, Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishers Inc., 1993), p. 3; Anthony Giddens, *The Consequences of Modernity* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1990), p. 3.

nationalistic offshoots of these (indeed I am aware of the modern sensibility which may underlie traditionalist Caymanian ideologies, and I examine this dilemma in greater detail in due course). While Caymanian nationalism is not as extreme as, say, German or Italian nationalism before the onset of the Second World War, as with the latter groups, I am inclined to understand it as inherently exclusivist. In this interpretative light, the condition of Caymanian nationalism represents the local – at times irrationally exclusivist and xenophobic, but almost never physically violent – zeal for a modern way of life steeped in ostensibly historically bound perceptions and traditions.

In the initial analysis, my understanding of modern Caymanian thought falls within the ambit of contemporary globalisation as articulated by Anthony Giddens. Giddens understands contemporary globalisation ‘as the intensification of world-wide social relationships which [economically and otherwise] link distant places in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring miles away and vice versa.’¹¹ I am aware that some scholars pinpoint the beginning of modern globalisation between 1519-21 when Portuguese explorer Ferdinand Magellan and his crew, equipped with new navigational and nautical technologies, were able to circumnavigate the earth (although Magellan died before the circumnavigation was complete), an accomplishment that indirectly led to the creation of new economic

¹¹ Giddens, *The Consequences of Modernity*, p. 64.

markets and zones (and, for that matter, colonial systems of slavery and the oppression of non-Western peoples) between Europe, Africa, the East, and the New World (or, the western hemisphere). Others argue that globalisation 'took off' in 1875 as a global capitalism premised on so-called free market forces became more entrenched among western nations especially, together with the global adoption of the Georgian calendar and the introduction of new telegraphic technologies.¹² Yet other so-called holistic, more orthodox scholars like Giddens, John Beynon, and Malcolm Waters, among others, concern themselves with contemporary globalisation as it developed apace after World War Two at a time when the global economy underwent dramatic transformation given the United States' emergence from its isolationist policy, the emancipation of European colonies and protectorates, and the polarization of the world between the closed, oppressive economic forces of socialism and the decidedly more free and enticing market forces of capitalism. A holistic approach to globalisation stresses that globalisation as a complete system must be carefully analyzed beyond the pale of economic and technological determinants if one is to understand how and why the various component forces which constitute it work. Thus contemporary globalisation, hereafter referred to as globalisation, for these scholars, locates its wholeness as a system in the conflation of technological, economic, political, and cultural factors as largely initiated – if no longer solely controlled – by the democratic West. Yet the understandings of the

¹² See Mauro Guillen, 'Is Globalization Civilizing, Destructive or Feeble? A Critique of Five Key Debates in the Social Science Literature', in *Readings in Globalization: Key Concepts and Major Debates*, edited by George Ritzer and Zeynep Atalay (West Sussex: Blackwell, 2010), pp. 4-5.

foregoing scholars have been challenged by Marxist interpretations of globalisation that are widely considered to be reductivist, although Marxist philosophers like Alexander Anievas claim that Marxist scholarship is methodologically holistic in its “total” understanding that our physical – or material – existence as we know it was created by, and is continuously shaped according to, the historic opposition (or dialectic) between capitalists and proletariat, between the haves and the have-nots.¹³

In *their* critique of contemporary culture – of which globalisation is invariably a part – Marxist scholars like Georg Lukacs, Eric Wolf and Sydel Silverman, for instance, have argued that social and cultural forces are ultimately reducible to a superseding economic, capitalistic force that is exploitative and competitive to its core, factors that provide this force its political logic.¹⁴ Marxist scholars working in the International Relations vein are keen to escape this reductivist label and first set out to explain the ‘hidden’ and unequal socio-political relationships that result in any capitalistic system that essentially functions on the economic privilege of the bourgeoisie, that is, the wealthy social capitalist class that owns most of the means of

¹³ Alexander Anievas, ‘The Renaissance of Historical Materialism in International Relations Theory: An Introduction’, in *Marxism and World Politics: Contesting Global Capitalism*, edited by Alexander Anievas (London: Routledge, 2010), pp. 1-10. Marxist-Communist thinking became intensely popular throughout the West after political philosophers Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels published their *Communist Manifesto* in 1848, a probing political treatise that holds that the history of class struggle has always been guided by economic forces that in effect pit the major unprivileged working class against the minor privileged capitalist class who the former must work for and are thus controlled by.

¹⁴ See for instance, Georg Lukacs, *History and Class Consciousness: Studies in Marxist Dialectics*, translated by Rodney Livingstone (London: Merlin Press, 1999 reprint); Eric Wolf and Sydel Silverman, *Pathways of Power: Building an Anthropology of the Modern World* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001).

production. In more globalist terms, such hidden relationships, for these scholars, work to confirm the neoliberal rules of globalisation, rules stressed by the capitalist class especially that, *inter alia*, individual governments should not substantively interfere with free market forces.¹⁵ Not only, then, do economics speak to the national and social class rivalries inherent in globalisation, but according to William Robinson, any transnational capitalist class (TCC) that results from neoliberalism and globalisation is itself prone to conflict and competition both without and indeed *within* its class.¹⁶ With the foregoing positions firmly in mind, Marxist scholars like Neil Davidson, Alex Callinicos and Justin Rosenberg, among others, tend to hold that any development generated by globalisation comes as a byproduct of the unequal social relations that are inherent in competitive capitalistic systems.¹⁷

If one were to theoretically expand the foregoing Marxists positions, they would resonate with Louise Amoore's pioneering, largely non-Marxist ideas regarding globalisation. Amoore explains that given the indispensable role of multinational corporations (MNCs) in restructuring and sustaining the global economy – which itself functions on the exploitation of certain workers at the continued benefit of the

¹⁵ For an especially detailed analysis of key Marxist interpretations of economics and social relations, see, in its entirety, Robert Antonio and Ira Cohen (eds.), *Marx and Modernity* (Malden: Blackwell, 2003).

¹⁶ William Robinson, 'Beyond the Theory of Imperialism: Global Capitalism and the Transnational State', in *Marxism and World Politics*, pp.61-3.

¹⁷ See, respectively, Neil Davidson, 'Many Capitals, Many States: Contingency, Logic, or Mediation?', pp. 77-93'; Alex Callinicos and Justin Rosenberg, 'Uneven and Combined Development: The Social-relational Substratum of the International? An Exchange of Letters, pp. 149-82, in *Marxism and World Politics*.

TCC – participant governments in the globalist cause have been keen to create ‘...a policy agenda that creates a competitive and capital-friendly environment for the MNCs.’¹⁸ Amoore thus confirms that globalisation is not as economically and technologically deterministic as many Marxist scholars would like to think, but that *any* development that comes as a result of globalisation has been largely shaped by political policies, policies that underwrite the international – indeed intensely unequal – political economy of globalisation.¹⁹

Globalisation debates continue unabated between Marxists, holists and revisionists. For instance, some scholars are split between whether globalisation is really happening, and if it is, does it confirm whether participant actors and agents like governments, firms and people are converging ‘their patterns of behavior’ towards a fair, universal creed? Other debates centre on whether globalisation undermines the authority of nation states, or whether there is such a thing as a *sui generis* global culture given the obvious social, political, technological and economic disparities that exist within globalisation.²⁰ Nonetheless, I am more inclined to view globalisation through holistic eyes away from Marxist interpretations of holism, although throughout Section 4 I utilize and define Marxist and other post-Marxist theories like postmodernism when it proves necessary to do so.

¹⁸ Louise Amoore, *Globalisation Contested: An International Political Economy at Work* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002), p.1

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, chapters 1 and 2.

²⁰ For a concise overview of these debates, see *Ibid.*, pp.1-13; see also Guillen, ‘Is Globalization Civilizing’, pp.3-18.

Towards outlining *my* holistic approach to understanding globalisation, Malcolm Waters maintains that, in the first instance, various technologies associated with telecommunications and travel especially have led to a shrinking world. Indeed, goods, products, and workers-cum-immigrants can easily and quickly be transported to virtually any location by plane or boat; additionally, people on one side of the world can instantaneously contact people on the other by telephone or over the Internet at little to no cost.²¹ All of this signals a global shrinkage premised on an economic and technological network of interdependence with an emphasis on the economic end of this sum; in other words, the economies of many nations across the globe, from the richest to the poorest and despite any Marxist interpretation geared towards Western exploitation premised on its competitive edge, have become invested in a rapidly expanding global economy where goods, services, and workers are able to move across borders with relative ease and little restriction. Indeed, so entrenched has the global economy become that 'national politics and economies can no longer stand alone', and John Beynon *et al.* have referred to this global phenomenon as the 'interdependency of separate economies.'²²

Nonetheless, by incorporating the idea of national politics into the phenomenon of globalisation, the realisation should be reached that globalisation indeed transcends

²¹ Malcolm Waters, *Globalization* (London: Routledge, 2001, 2nd edition), chapter 1.

²² John Beynon and David Dunkerley (eds.), *Globalization: The Reader* (London: Athlone Press, 2000), p. 11.

its economic and technological symptoms. David Held *et al.* hold that political globalisation also occurs when the politics of an otherwise economically and politically closed non-Western nation undergoes fundamental changes in response to globalisation. According to them, globalisation is premised upon the principle of liberal democracy, and by association, capitalism.²³ Therefore, if a country wishes to participate in global trade on “free” capital markets, it must politically adapt to the economic principles of the free world. For instance, as communism began to collapse in 1989, we find former European communist countries like Czechoslovakia and Bulgaria embracing democracy and its economic principle, thereafter making great dividends through the process of globalisation. In contrast, although China is still a communist country, it has a heavy investment in the global economy, an investment which has required a significant and rather contradictory relaxation of socialist trends towards exports and imports which is manifested in the anti-communist actuality of a powerful, autonomous, *autochthonous* economic elite in cities like Hong Kong and Macau at the expense of the impoverished Chinese masses throughout the rest of China who, under the full dictates of communism, have no such recourse to copious, fluid capital.

Political globalisation and global culture thus are often connected as the governmental process which drives political globalisation can and will precipitate

²³ See David Held *et al.*, *Global Transformations* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999), pp. 49-85.

dissent from adherents of traditional culture in a locality where the modern cultural forces of globalisation are quite noticeable. Thus in the first instance, when I speak of a traditional Caymanian culture, I am referring to Raymond Williams's evolved definition of culture as it applies to 'a whole way of life', indeed the 'common experience' of a particular group of people inclusive of their values, beliefs, and behaviours.²⁴ To further expand on the idea of traditional Caymanian culture, a traditional Caymanian way of life is (or should be) rooted in historical values, beliefs, and behaviours, and employs nostalgic rhetoric which emphasizes that the past and all that it stood for is pure and good.²⁵ However, this is not to say that Caymanians influenced by *modern* traditionalist sentiments – such sentiments essentially providing a counterpoint to traditional counterparts that are more historically accurate as we will see – are not agents of an unconscious anti-historical agenda in the sense that not only are their articulations of the past being negatively influenced by, *inter alia*, the glut of incoming foreign nationals, but, as I demonstrate throughout Section 4, these very articulations, as favourable as they may be, often represent a distorted – mythical – linguistic reinvention of the past; as if these Caymanians are attempting to verbally reevaluate the past in impossibly epic terms so as to further legitimate their God-given status as Caymanians, in addition to

²⁴ Raymond Williams, *Culture and Society, 1780-1950* (New York: Columbia Press, 1983), pp. xviii. Williams argues that with the advent of industrialism and democracy, and the various social and political developments which resulted, the meaning of culture has evolved from '...a state or habit of the mind, or the body of intellectual and moral activities...to a whole way of life' based on the common experiences of a people bound by nationality (pp. xviii-xix.).

²⁵ David Lowenthal, *The Past Is a Foreign Country* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), pp. 4-13.

having a powerful nativist language at hand that can be used in that ‘moment of [multicultural] danger.’²⁶ In the context of this study, this legitimization essentially speaks to the reinvention of traditionalist rhetoric in the present – or the recent present – and its subsequent justification on historical and traditional grounds, a legitimization that, for its interlocutors, serves, in a fixed sense, to describe ‘the way [they] once were’ and would like to continue to be, but which is decidedly more dynamic and modern than they may perhaps be willing to admit.²⁷ I here rely on Hugh Trevor Roper’s implication of the mythical underpinning of such a legitimization: thus when such traditionalist sentiments become normalized in the present, they possess the innate ability to dislodge less confrontational, more traditionally (indeed *historically*) sincere sensibilities, in the process becoming the new ‘soul’ of that aspect of history that their interlocutors are striving to emphasize.²⁸ My idea of sensibility displacement is compatible with Eric Hobsbawm’s own conception of the dual force that can govern the (re)invention of any article of tradition: first, as modern constructions, reinvented traditionalist sentiments accumulate normality to the point where their artificiality is forgotten and their inherent sensibilities are in turn taken as unequivocal, *accurate*, cultural truths; and, second, that such sentiments are constructions of the modern age, these

²⁶ See Walter Benjamin, ‘On the Concept of History’, in *Walter Benjamin: Selected Writings, Volume 4 – 1983-1990*, translated by Edmund Jephcott *et al.* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1990), pp. 389.

²⁷ Cf. Carol Gluck, ‘The Invention of Edo’, in *Mirror of Modernity: Invented Traditions of Modern Japan*, edited by Stephen Vlastos (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), p. 262.

²⁸ Cf. Hugh Trevor Roper, *The Invention of Scotland: Myth and History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), p. xiv.

inherent, at times xenophobic, sensibilities create, by default, a temporal impasse, disconnecting a biased, nationalist agenda in the present from the “purer” historical time that these very sensibilities are seeking to invoke.²⁹ When I utilize the term *traditionalist* rhetoric – that *-ist* working, in the context of modernity, to capture the ways in which a more historically sound traditional Caymanian thought pattern is being reworked and reinvented – I am always mindful of the modern sensibilities which reinforce it. Thus throughout Section 3 I examine inward-looking traditional Caymanian sentiments that are largely dependent on the lived experiences of their interlocutors, subsequently making the argument in Section 4 that contemporary Caymanian xenophobia – and by extension, nationalism – locates *its* ideological basis in an intensely reworked traditional perception that established Caymanians constitute ‘a...body of people united by common descent, culture, or language, inhabiting a particular state or territory.’³⁰ I use the term established Caymanian in the same way that Caymanian historian JA Roy Bodden does: to denote that there were no indigenous populations in the Cayman Islands at the time of their discovery in 1503; indeed, many an established Caymanian in the present – but not necessarily all – can only trace his or her Caymanian ancestry to circa 1734 and later when Grand Cayman was becoming permanently settled.³¹

²⁹ Cf. Eric Hobsbawm, ‘Introduction: Inventing Traditions’, in *The Invention of Tradition*, edited by Eric Hobsbawm and Terrence Ranger (Cambridge; Cambridge University Press, 1983), p.1.

³⁰ Definition taken from the *Unabridged Oxford English Dictionary* (11th edition), edited by Catherine Soanes and Angus Stevenson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), p. 952.

³¹ Bodden has ‘intentionally avoided the inaccurate term “indigenous Caymanian” as there is no record of any aboriginal inhabitants on these islands’; instead he opts for “established Caymanian.”

In somewhat of a contrasting fashion, the idea of global culture can be described as spawning modern cultural identities and sentiments opposed to so-called traditional ones.³² For Held *et al.*, global culture is driven by the emotion, behaviours, and values of prosperity, and not necessarily local traditional values and behaviours developed through historical processes.³³ Richard Warren Perry, for instance, argues that whereas a traditional national culture is richly marbled with memory and nostalgia, global culture remains fundamentally without cultural and national memory; driven mainly by selfish economic concerns situated in the present, he stresses that global culture is free from the moral and ethical constraints of traditional culture.³⁴ Nonetheless, it is my belief that every strain of global culture need not be premised upon a strict economic selfishness given globalisation's concomitant force of multiculturalism. By multiculturalism I am referring to the cultural-cum-ideological stance taken by many nationals working in foreign countries: their view of 'assimilation or acculturation [to the host culture] as a violation of the integrity or dignity of the individual, whose cultural habits should be recognized fully as an integral element of the person's identity.'³⁵ This adherence to a home culture can also be referred to as transnationalism, or, according to Linda Basch *et al.*: '...the

See Bodden, *The Cayman Islands in Transition: The Politics, History, and Sociology of the Cayman Islands* (Kingston: Ian Randle Publishers, 2007), pp. xiv–xv.

³² Stuart Hall, *Myths of Caribbean Identity* (Warwick: The Centre for Caribbean Studies, 1991).

³³ See footnote 23.

³⁴ See Richard Warren Perry, 'Rebooting the World Picture: Flying Windows of Globalization in the End Times', in *Globalization Under Construction: Governmentality Law, and Identity*, edited by Richard Warren Perry and Bill Maurer (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003), pp. 315–356.

³⁵ Alain G-Gagnon and Raffaele Iacovino, 'Interculturalism: expanding the boundaries of citizenship', in *Democracy, Nationalism and Multiculturalism*, edited by Ramon Maiz and Ferran Requejo (New York: Frank Cass Publishers, 2005), p. 26.

processes by which immigrants forge and sustain multi-stranded social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement.’³⁶ All of the above can be placed within John Tomlinson’s conception that *some* sort of cultural sensibility ‘...is actually constitutive of [the] complex connectivity’ that comes as a result of globalisation.’³⁷

It is also true that strains of global culture can foster an appreciation for, and utilization of, the expatriate’s home culture: if certain aspects of the host culture are compatible with the expatriate’s home culture, then culture-empathy among both groups is possible. However, what is the real reciprocal value of any possible culture-empathy among those *traditionalist* Caymanians who feel that their very way of life is being threatened by an influx of foreign nationals regardless of any similar cultural outlook between them? On the other hand, would Caymanians more “modern” in their national and cultural outlooks be more likely to celebrate their multicultural, cosmopolitan society, thereby legitimating multiculturalism and transnationalism? These questions drive this dissertation’s objectives.

Therefore, it is my belief that Caymanian cultural and national sentiment is distinctly torn between these two distinct ideological forces. Yet, however much some

³⁶ Linda Basch *et al.*, *Nations Unbound: Transnational Projects, postcolonial predicaments, and De-territorialized Nation States* (London: Routledge, 2005 reprint), p. 8.

³⁷ John Tomlinson, *Globalization and Culture* (Chicago: Polity Press, 1999), p. 22.

Caymanians may invoke a sense of history and tradition in their understanding of themselves cultural beings, this is automatically challenged by the presence of another Caymanian modern actuality substantiated upon a profuse materiality and compellingly instantiated in the relative ease with which Caymanians are able to acquire “earthly” possessions. This is nothing new among modern nationalities, yet we should continuously appreciate that its underlying effect defies any linear cultural link between the economically conservative and moderate past and the economically lavish and prosperous present; such an underlying effect, therefore, at once challenges any practical, traditional cultural Caymanian understanding which perhaps ignorantly professes the desire to return to an economically backward – if ostensibly culturally purer – past. Thus it is at the point of interaction between modern and traditional thought that ‘new forms of sociality...emerge within a global order’,³⁸ and this study addresses this emergence within the borders of a globalised, self-sustaining British Dependency.

Any further introduction to this study’s intentions is done through an assessment of the values and ultimate shortcomings of the existing literature in the field.

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As I provide a list of the pertinent literature, it should be stressed that to date no extensive work has been done on providing any historical bases for present-day

³⁸ Larry Ray, *Globalization and Everyday Life* (London: Routledge, 2007), p. 2.

Caymanian cultural sentiments. Neither has any work attempted to comprehensively interrogate the extent to which such sentiments are either accepting of, or hostile towards, incoming peoples and their culture. Small parts of Roy Bodden's work, *The Cayman Islands in Transition*,³⁹ only begin to touch on the latter area, while Brian Kieran's *The Lawless Caymanas*⁴⁰ provides indispensable historical background to my research through its description of race relations in the Cayman Islands before and after the former slaves' complete emancipation in 1835 (as we shall later see in my historical overview, the apprenticeship of the former slaves was prematurely dismantled in the Cayman Islands). Additionally, Michael Craton's *Founded Upon the Seas*,⁴¹ the fullest account of the islands to date, especially explores the extent to which certain periods of Cayman's history betrayed a slavocratic essence where a slavocracy denotes men and women dedicated to the ownership of slaves and a socio-economic way of life premised upon slave labour.⁴²

Together with the works of Roger C. Smith's *Maritime Heritage of the Cayman Islands*,⁴³ Ulf Hannerz's *Caymanian Politics*,⁴⁴ and Neville Williams's *A History of the*

³⁹ Bodden, *The Cayman Islands*, chapter 4.

⁴⁰ Brian Kieran, *The Lawless Caymanas* (West Bay, Grand Cayman: Brian Kieran, 1992).

⁴¹ Michael Craton, *Founded Upon the Seas: A History of the Cayman Islands and Their People* (Kingston: Ian Randle Publishers, 2003).

⁴² The term slavocracy is typically applied to the American South, denoting the planters' aggressive will to remain slaveholders towards the American Civil War. The term, however, can still be applied to relatively non-aggressive people who saw slavery and slave ownership as a natural, God-given right. For a more comprehensive assessment of the term, see especially Chauncy Samuel Boucher, *In RE That Aggressive Slavocracy* (Boston: Tufts University Press, 2007).

⁴³ Roger Smith, *The Maritime Heritage of the Cayman Islands* (Miami: University Press of Florida, 2000).

Cayman Islands,⁴⁵ Craton's work has given me greater insight into the social, cultural economic, and occupational forces responsible for spawning a historical Caymanian identity which has remained under-articulated and conceptually biased in the idea that the Caymanian ancestor was more seafarer than he was slaver. In 1910, Commissioner to the Cayman Islands George Hirst published his *Notes on the History of the Cayman Islands*, a work that is also important to the wider historical concerns of my thesis. *Notes* is a compilation of primary-source data, shedding light, where possible, on the tensions which existed between Caymanian slaves and their masters.⁴⁶ Indeed, Hirst's assessment of the adjudication of certain instances of slave rebellion in Grand Cayman is especially vital to those aspects of my argument that favour the existence of a slavocratic Cayman, as any pertinent primary documents here are to be found only in his work. Hirst's compilation, as we will especially see in my historical background, provides singular clues to a historical Caymanian existence predicated on racial inequality and slavocratic principles, while laying the groundwork for analyses aimed at dispelling the present-day sentiment – pushed by Bodden especially – that Cayman was not a true slave society.⁴⁷ Articles by Vered

⁴⁴ Ulf Hannerz, *Caymanian Politics: Structure and Style in a Changing Island Society* (Stockholm: Department of Social Anthropology, University of Stockholm, 1974).

⁴⁵ Neville Williams, *A History of the Cayman Islands* (George Town, Grand Cayman: Cayman Islands Government, 1970).

⁴⁶ George Hirst, *Notes on the History of the Cayman Islands* (George Town, Grand Cayman: Cayman Islands Government, 1967 reprint).

⁴⁷ See Bodden, *The Cayman Islands*, chapter 1.

Amit⁴⁸ and James Billmyer⁴⁹ have also contributed to understandings surrounding Cayman's enslaved and racist past respectively; Amit's article also strives somewhat to situate the modern logic of Caymanianness within the forces of globalisation and multiculturalism as these socio-cultural, socio-economic elements combine to underpin established Caymanian notions of foreign-ness.

Published in 1887, L.R. Fyfe's *Grand Cayman: Report of the Official Visit Preceded by Minute of Instructions by His Excellency Sir H.W. Norman...Governor of Jamaica*,⁵⁰ also proves important to any argument concerned with the historical origin of traditional Caymanian thought. L.R. Fyfe of the Colonial Secretary's Office in Jamaica was commissioned by the then Governor of Jamaica to make an investigation and enquiry into certain administrative issues of the Cayman Islands in August 1887. Fyfe's mission was to engage in dialogue with members of Cayman's judiciary – the Magistracy – as well as the inhabitants, subsequently penning a report on the general condition of Grand Cayman, and to a lesser extent, the sister islands.⁵¹ This report is important in two ways: first, it confirms the continuing historical theme of existential hardship in the Cayman Islands; and

⁴⁸ Vered Amit, 'A Clash of Vulnerabilities: Citizenship Labor, and Expatriacy in the Cayman Islands', in *American Ethnologist*, vol.28, no.3 (2001), pp. 574–94.

⁴⁹ James Billmyer, 'The Cayman Islands', *Geographical Review*, vol.36, no.1 (1946), pp. 574–594.

⁵⁰ L. R. Fyfe, *Grand Cayman: Report of Official Visit Preceded by Minute of Instructions by His Excellency Sir H.W. Norman...Governor of Jamaica* (Kingston: Government Printing Establishment, 1887).

⁵¹ 'Minutes', in Fyfe, *Grand Cayman*, p. 1.

second, it begins to establish the historicity of a traditional line of Caymanian thought which infers its indebtedness to this theme.

With the exception of Fyfe's and Hirst's offerings, which figure more as primary sources, I now expand on the mainly historical intentions of the above secondary works by first looking at Bodden's arguments regarding Cayman's non-slavocratic nature.

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Roy Bodden is the only established Caymanian to effectively attempt to link Cayman's settled past with its present to explain the dynamics of a changing society. Acknowledging his agenda from the outset, Bodden characterizes historical Caymanian society as a pigmentocracy, while simultaneously stressing that this society never really ('comparatively speaking') represented a true slave society (I define the slave society concept in the following paragraph).⁵² A pigmentocracy refers to a society whose hierarchy is determined by nurtured and repressed understandings of racial superiority.⁵³ Whereas Craton reiterates that, although not the most economically prosperous British New World colony, Cayman should really be seen as a true slave society up until the

⁵² Bodden, *The Cayman Islands*, p. 9.

⁵³ Bodden invokes American historian Frank Tannenbaum's use of the term pigmentocracy. Yet, and on the contrary, channeling Bodden's coinage of this term through Tannenbaum's own usage brings us back to the inescapable understanding that a pigmentocracy was a 'stratified society.' Therefore, any understanding of the pigmentocracy, for Bodden's muse (that is, Tannenbaum), is implicated in the fact 'the Negro, much against his will, was to become a participant in the building of the New World.' There is nothing less relatively tense about a pigmentocracy in this sense; see Frank Tannenbaum, *Slave and Citizen: The Negro in the Americas* (New York: Random House, 1946), pp. 127 and 35, respectively.

slaves' emancipation on August 1, 1834,⁵⁴ Bodden contends simply that 'the entire [historical Caymanian] social order was characterized on the basis of skin colour ... [and thus a pigmentocracy].'⁵⁵ Bodden's argument does not take into account that Cayman society, since its inception, was dependent on slave labour, both in the mahogany-cutting industry of the second half of the eighteenth century, but more so in the subsequent cotton-cultivation enterprise, which continued well into the 1830s.⁵⁶ Complete with a subjugated majority and a dominant minority, such a society must have exhibited slavocratic social trends. I stress that the size of the slave society and the relative impoverishment of its governing body do not particularly matter, just its essential form – regardless of both historical Cayman being 'vested in [a] seafaring ... economy', and Grand Cayman's atypical white to black and coloured population ratio relative to the rest of the British West Indies throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.⁵⁷ Indeed, between 1802 and 1834, slaves constituted between 58 and 55% of Grand Cayman's population, but the understanding here should not be lost that they *did* preponderate.⁵⁸

⁵⁴ Craton, *Founded*, p. 63.

⁵⁵ Bodden, *The Cayman Islands*, p. 7.

⁵⁶ See Craton, *Founded*, chapters 3 and 4.

⁵⁷ Amit, 'A Clash of Vulnerabilities', pp. 579-580.

⁵⁸ In 1802, Grand Cayman's first census revealed that slaves represented 58% of 933 inhabitants, while in 1834, slaves constituted 55% of Cayman's population; see, respectively, CINA (compiler), *Our Islands' Past: Edward Corbet's Report and Census of 1802 on the Cayman Islands*, vol. 1 (George Town: CINA and Cayman Free Press, 1992), p. 21; Grand Caymanas Slave Returns, April 1, 1834, PRO, T71/243, ff.133-134.

Although Craton claims that many Caymanian ‘slaves were able to live like subsistence farmers’ as the slaves’ emancipation approached due to Grand Cayman’s declining cotton trade by 1808, as slaves they still would have been subjected to the strictures of the colonial regime either as field or domestic labourers.⁵⁹ This claim, in the first instance, begins to conform to Elsa Goveia’s understanding that a ‘slave society may ‘refer to [a] whole community based on slavery, [inclusive of] masters and freedmen as well as slaves.’ In her classic attempt to assess the slavocratic essence of the Leeward Islands of the Caribbean, Goveia’s arguments hinge on attempting to: ‘identify the basic principles which held the white masters, coloured freedmen, and Negro slaves together as a community, and to trace the influence of these principles on the relations between the Negro slave and his white master, which largely determined the form and content of the society.’⁶⁰ Goveia’s definition indicates that a slave society was predicated on a social hierarchy in which the colour of one’s skin determined his or her position in that hierarchy. This triangular hierarchy consisted of the numerically minor European and creolized – or local born – whites at the top, followed by the numerically larger indigenous, largely miscegenated free people of colour;⁶¹ and finally, there were the preponderant blacks who would have either been Africans or else creole. In light of

⁵⁹ Craton, *Founded*, pp. 77-79.

⁶⁰Elsa Goveia, *Slave Societies in the British Leeward Islands* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1965), p. vii.

⁶¹It is important to stress here that in the early years of colonialism, whites outnumbered free people of colour, although by the emancipation of British West Indian slaves, free people of colour had become more numerous than whites. For the relevant statistics, see for instance, Orlando Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death: A Comparative Study* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 1985), pp. 477-480.

this social ordering, Heuman is able to make the assertion, using Jamaica as an enduring example, that slave societies were ‘...dominated numerically by blacks and economically by whites’, an assertion which, as my historical background will show, becomes applicable to Cayman society up until 1835.⁶² In this sense, Bodden’s use of pigmentocracy to counter understandings associated with slave societies becomes negligible, at least until May of 1835, when Caymanian apprentices were unconditionally set free.⁶³ Indeed, the pigmentocracy concept would be more applicable to the nine-month span leading up to complete emancipation of Caymanian apprentices. Especially relying on Kieran’s *Lawless Caymanas*, it will become clearer in my historical background that a pigmentocratic Cayman, unlike its previous slavocratic equivalent, revolved around the former slaveholder’s continued efforts to keep blacks subjugated, and the latter’s attempts to resist this imperative.⁶⁴ This is not to say that slavocratic Cayman was not predicated on the social ordering of a pigmentocracy, for it was; however, the term pigmentocracy is much too limited a nomenclature to describe a society where slavery existed and proved institutionally important to the wider society.

⁶² Gad Heuman, *Between Black and White: Race, Politics, and the Freed Coloreds in Jamaica, 1792-1865* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1981), p. 3.

⁶³ See ‘Address to the Inhabitants of the Grand Caymanas’, May 3, 1835, in Sligo [governor of Jamaica] to the Colonial Secretary, April 27, 1835, PRO, CO 147/198, ff. 318-319. This document, in its complete form, can also be found in Kieran, *Lawless Caymanas*, p. 61.

⁶⁴ See Kieran, *Lawless Caymanas*, chapters 6, 7, and 8.

Given historical Cayman's slavocratic hierarchical nature, we should in accordance with Goveia's definition strive to understand the attendant binaristic ideologies of superiority and inferiority on the basis of colour. These nurtured understandings were all a part of a social complex built on slavery, and whose internal logic spoke not only to the "world the slaveholders made", but confirmed the extent to which both free and enslaved were destined to develop a creolized culture based on disparate, often conflicting ideas of race and culture.⁶⁵ In this sense, a creole Caribbean society denotes that without the hierarchical social and race-based caste of whites, free people of colour, and slaves, the idea of racial superiority would not have been as socially pervading as it was, and continues to be, in the Caribbean context.⁶⁶ This is why slave societies in the Caribbean were 'characterized by a very restricted hierarchical mobility.'⁶⁷ However, like Bodden, Amit and Hannerz are not inclined to assess historical Cayman's hierarchy in strict slavocratic terms.

In her effort to pinpoint the underlying factors for the present cultural clash between Caymanians and expatriates (a clash which underpins any bristling sense

⁶⁵ See Franklin Knight, *The Genesis of a Fragmented Nationalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), p.121. Indeed, Knight's use of the expression "the world the slaveholders made" automatically draws attention to Eugene Genovese's important work which ultimately seeks to demonstrate that the New World slaveholders' pro-slavery philosophy was necessarily driven by economic motivations. See, accordingly, *The World the Slaveholders Made: Two Essays in Interpretation* (Hanover, New Hampshire: Wesleyan University Press, 1988, 1st edition).

⁶⁶ See Edward Brathwaite, *The Development of Creole Society in Jamaica, 1770-1820* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978).

⁶⁷ See Thomas Durant, Jr. *et al.*, *Plantation Society and Race Relations* (Westport: Praeger, 1999), p.20; see also, Knight, 'Slavery in a Plantation Society', in *Caribbean Slavery in the Atlantic World: A Student Reader*, edited by Verene Shepherd and Hilary Beckles (Kingston: Ian Randle Publishers, 1999), pp. 398-412.

of Caymanian nationalism, and which my thesis focuses on in the greatest detail in Section 4.2), Amit makes the historically bound presumption that because Grand Cayman lacked an absentee class and the 'socioeconomic extremes and racial polarization associated with Caribbean plantation societ[ies] [in general]', it cannot be viewed as an authentic plantation society. In the Caribbean setting, a plantation society referred to a social structure that was predicated on the economics of monoculture which, after 1510 especially, relied on African enslaved labour.⁶⁸ '[U]nlike most of the other Caribbean islands', Amit continues, 'the Caymanian dependence on the colonial metropolises was historically vested in a seafaring rather than a plantation economy.'⁶⁹ Referring to historical Cayman's social hierarchy as vertically compressed (something that she leaves for Hannerz to fully explain and which I look at just below), Amit continues to defend her argument of a non-plantocratic Grand Cayman by pointing to the absence of 'institutions such as "family land", which appeared throughout the Caribbean region.'⁷⁰ In the context of the British West Indies especially, non-white – indeed enslaved – notions of family land, it has been argued, developed out of the condition of slavery, a development based 'on [the] customary [and/or legal] rights [of black people] to land.' 'Within the constraints of the plantation system', such rights often referred to the slaves' permitted access to land like provision grounds and kitchen gardens where they

⁶⁸ See Franklin Knight, 'Introduction', in *A General History of the Caribbean: Volume III: The Slave Societies of the Caribbean*, edited by Franklin Knight (London: UNESCO Publishing, 1999), pp. 1-8.

⁶⁹ Amit, 'A Clash of Vulnerabilities', p. 579-580.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 580.

were allowed by their masters to cultivate their own produce, often producing surpluses which could be sold at public markets.⁷¹ Yet, rights to land were also won by maroons who were successful runaway slaves that settled in areas in the mountainous, dense regions of countries like Jamaica and Guyana. These maroons would develop their newly won land into 'sacred landscapes' of subsistence and habitation that would come to signify complete black autonomy.⁷² Thus Amit's superficial use of family land does not take into account Jean Besson's compelling research on the origins of family land – from the angle of blackness – in the Caribbean and especially the ways in which access to land during slavery not only created a protopeasantry in the Caribbean – premised on Sidney Mintz's idea that slaves especially should be seen as protopeasants given that they worked provision grounds for much of their own subsistence⁷³ – but that this very access differed throughout the Caribbean. Indeed, Amit does not consider that the presence of provision grounds in Cayman – in the face of the evidentiary absence of marronage there – should at the very least prompt preliminary ideas about the origins of family land – as defined above – in that colony as such ideas also work to forward the well-researched position of Mintz and Besson that although customary and legal rights

⁷¹ After the abolition of slavery in the British West Indies, former slaves were convinced that these provision grounds rightfully belonged to them and their families, thereby securing the origins of family land as caught up in the experience of slavery. See Jean Besson, *Martha Brae's Two Histories; European Expansion and Caribbean Culture Building in the Caribbean* (Kingston: Ian Randle Publishers, 2002), p.86; see also Besson, 'Family Land and Caribbean Society: Toward and Ethnography of Afro-Caribbean Peasantries', in *Perspectives on Caribbean Regional Identity*, edited by Elizabeth M. Thomas-Hope (Liverpool: Centre for Latin American Studies, University of Liverpool Monograph Series no. 11, 1984), pp.57-83.

⁷² Besson, *Martha Brae's Two Histories*, pp. 85-87.

⁷³ See Sidney Mintz, *Caribbean Transformations* (New York: Columbia University, 1989, 2nd edition).

to land among blacks varied with topography, any ostensible absence of these rights should not serve to impugn the slavocratic and/or plantocratic worth of the colony in question.⁷⁴

Amit's understandings of historical Cayman prove to be somewhat compatible with Hannerz's, who begins to explain his position on the matter: 'For some time, cotton was exported to Jamaica. [Inchoate Caymanians] also kept horses, cattle, goats, pigs and poultry. Like their Jamaican counterparts, these settlers were slave owners, and the Cayman Islands thus began as a slave society.'⁷⁵ However, by constantly offsetting any Cayman-based system of slavery before emancipation in 1834 with the indispensable occupations of wrecking and turtle-fishing, Hannerz imposes upon historical Cayman society a substantively non-slavocratic essence: Cayman slavery, then, according to him, cannot be "negatively" associated with the harsh enslaved regime of plantation societies because of 'the absence of large plantations' in Grand Cayman; instead, Cayman's colonial history becomes a more positive one 'in terms of [the island's] orientation to the sea', and thus the importance of cotton cultivation to Cayman's colonial economy is minimized.⁷⁶ Hannerz's position begins to underpin Higman's terse, uncorroborated comment that Cayman's economy to 1834 was solely invested in turtle, an assertion which automatically

⁷⁴ *Ibid*; see also Besson, 'Land, Kinship and Community in the Post-Emancipation Caribbean: A Regional View of the Leewards', in *Small Islands, Large Questions: Society, Culture and Resistance in the Post-Emancipation Caribbean*, edited by Karen Fog Olwig (London: Frank Cass, 1995), pp. 73-99.

⁷⁵ Hannerz, *Caymanian Politics*, p. 24.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 30.

denies the numerically preponderant Caymanian slave any indispensable ideological, occupational, social, and cultural role in the forging of a Caymanian identity from the preceding decades.⁷⁷

Amit's understanding of historical Caymanian society as hierarchically compressed thus finds distillation in Hannerz's argument which *ultimately* strives to demonstrate Cayman's social circumstance as noticeably non-slavocratic, that is, without the rigid social ordering of big plantation societies like Jamaica and Barbados.⁷⁸ Hierarchical compression here denotes that whites in Grand Cayman were not spread across the three major social groupings of the *grand blancs* (absentees and the oligarchic aristocracy), the secondary whites (doctors, administrative officials, well-to-do merchants, etc.), and the *petit blancs* (plantation overseers and bookkeepers, subsistent farmers, tradesmen and the like); as Hannerz puts it, whites in colonial Cayman would have ranged in social rank 'from modest to bourgeois, but never aristocratic.'⁷⁹ Cayman's white social hierarchy was therefore compressed to the lower two white classes, something which, according to

⁷⁷ See Barry Higman, *Slave Populations of the British Caribbean, 1807-1834* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University, 1984), p. 43.

⁷⁸ There is a substantial amount of scholarship on the hierarchical rigidity of larger plantation societies in the British Caribbean; see, for instance, David Davis, *Inhuman Bondage: The Rise and Fall of Slavery in the New World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), chapter 3; Barry Higman, 'The Invention of Slave Society', in *Slavery, Freedom, and Gender: The Dynamics of Caribbean Society*, edited by Brian Moore (Kingston: University of the West Indies Press, 2001), pp.5 7-75.

⁷⁹ Hannerz, *Caymanian Politics*, p. 27.

Amit, was bound to positively affect the treatment of slaves in Cayman.⁸⁰ Since Grand Cayman's economy 'never afforded a leisure class of land owners [during slavery]', the lifestyles of some whites were 'little different from that of the former slaves by the post-emancipation period.' Therefore, Caymanian whites and their free and enslaved non-white fellow islanders never functioned within the rigid and restricted structures of the larger plantation societies.⁸¹ Nonetheless, Hannerz does stress that racial tensions did exist, but with a compressed social hierarchy, the island's bare economic and judicial system was bound to generate a 'relative cultural homogeneity.'⁸²

Hannerz's idea of Grand Cayman's social-racial hierarchy forms the basis of Bodden's understanding of a distinct developing Caymanian outlook that began in the first decades of early settlement on Grand Cayman: 'the exigencies of life on a small frontier outpost with no guarantees of survival precluded any rigid social stratification.'⁸³ As a result, the tiny settlement's lack of "'men of substance and taste'" rendered racial relationships in Grand Cayman different: '[w]hat made [these] relationships different in [Grand Cayman] vis-à-vis the wider Caribbean', Bodden continues, 'was that the physical and environmental characteristics of the Cayman Islands dictated that symbiosis rather than adversarial relationships, was

⁸⁰ Amit, 'A Clash of Vulnerabilities', pp. 580-1.

⁸¹ Hannerz, *Caymanian Politics*, p. 30.

⁸² *Ibid.*

⁸³ Bodden, *The Cayman Islands*, p. 4.

the norm.’⁸⁴ In other words, given its lack of natural resources together with its relative mercantilist worthlessness and isolation, we return to the point that the hierarchical social structure of Grand Cayman would have reflected not a slavocracy, but a pigmentocracy. Although a pigmentocracy functioned on a discriminative ethnic basis, according to Bodden, historical Cayman’s pigmentocracy remained without the brutal racist manifestations of a “real” slave plantation society.⁸⁵ Bodden’s understanding of Cayman as a society with slaves rather than a slave society, as we shall see in my historical background, depends largely on statistical fact together with the enduring fact of Cayman’s administrative and colonial neglect by Jamaica.

By providing a rudimentary definition for his own understanding of the slave-society concept (so defined just below) with which to ground his arguments, Bodden illustrates the legacy of colonialism in the Cayman Islands and confirms both the physical subjugation of the Caymanian slave and the ‘social limbo that defined the ex-slave experience.’ From 1734 to 1834, then (a time period that I refer to as Cayman’s slave century), Cayman society, according to Bodden, could not be truly seen as a slave society as ‘slave societies were those societies where free whites were significantly outnumbered by their black slaves.’⁸⁶ His subsequent confirmation that

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

⁸⁵ See footnote 39.

⁸⁶ Bodden, *The Cayman Islands*, p. xiv.

the effects of slavery did not combine towards the manufacture of institutionalized slavery seems to link, in his view, with both historical Cayman's atypical colour ratios and the relative intra-racial harmony generated by the islands' isolation, although it should be reiterated that from 1802 to 1834 especially slaves in the Cayman Islands numerically preponderated at well over 55% of the population.⁸⁷ It is thus worth inquiring into the question of whether those conditions were somehow responsible for the relative reduction of the brutal dynamics of slavery in the Cayman Islands, although such an avenue of inquiry has its own dangers, as Bodden himself is quick to point out in his caveat that 'no slavery was ideal.'⁸⁸ Can one, then, truly assume that slavery was not very harsh in the Cayman Islands, when Hirst especially presents compelling evidence that Cayman slaves were publicly and brutally punished, treated no better than chattel, and subjected to back-breaking labour, especially during the short-lived cotton boom to around 1810?

I ultimately disagree with Bodden on the institutionalized worth of slavery in the Cayman Islands; I elaborate on this disagreement further in my historical background. Nonetheless, I am attracted to certain elements of his argument that

⁸⁷ The slave population of most English-speaking Caribbean territories by 1834 constituted around 87 to more than 90% of the overall population; see, for instance, Orlando Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death: A Comparative Study* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 1982), pp. 477-483. In Cayman, in contrast, by 1802, slaves represented 58% of the population, and by 1826, 56% of the population (Heuman 1981, 3-9). For 1826 population statistics, see Bodden, *The Cayman Islands*, p. 9; see also PRO, CO 137/198, f. 318; for 1802 statistics see CINA and Cayman Free Press, *Our Islands' Past: Edward Corbet's Report and Census of 1802 on the Cayman Islands*, vol.1 (George Town, Grand Cayman: CINA and Cayman Free Press, 1992), p. 21.

⁸⁸ Bodden, *The Cayman Islands*, p. 45.

strive to link a cultural Caymanian past with its present derivative. In the first instance, Bodden sees early Caymanian existence as representative of a frontier society – a concept which he does not adequately explain, although he does attempt to link the frontier concept with modern-day Cayman when he states: '[f]rontier societies invariably attract many different types of people. The composition of Caymanian society today enables us to envisage what the social construct was in an earlier time.'⁸⁹ Bodden's past-present linkage here is vague: on the surface, how can an influx of white, brown, and black foreigners in a globalised age illustrate the composition of an earlier, closed, and insular Caymanian society? One suspects that Bodden is really striving to corroborate the idea that the historical Cayman Islands, like all other Caribbean islands, were stratified along colour lines, a line of thought which opens up a credible, if controversial, avenue of inquiry into that element of a modern Caymanian cultural understanding that refuses to acknowledge the historicity of slavery in the shaping of certain racist – even racist – Caymanian attitudes in the present. To be clear, a cultural refusal of this nature contravenes the anecdotally accurate insight which stresses that an understanding of the cultural present requires a comprehensive, "honest" assessment of its historical past, something which Bodden seems to be avoiding by not providing a thorough enough assessment of the numerical and ideological importance of slaves and slavery to Caymanian history and culture. Towards establishing both the unequal human

⁸⁹*Ibid.*, p. 44.

origins of Caymanian history and the extent to which Caymanians in the present are [un]aware of this, I argue that slavery represented an enduring part of Cayman's colonial reality; even despite the fact that the master-slave relationship, admittedly, appeared comparatively more benign than, say, master-slave relations in Jamaica or Barbados.⁹⁰ In any case, Bodden's historical understandings are of vital tempering importance to my own attempt to determine the extent of Craton's under-assessed stress that historical circumstance helps to shape present-day cultural and national sentiments; according to Craton, if we choose not to view Caymanian society to 1834 as a slave society, then any attendant present-day Caymanian understanding and expression of the past may indeed be distorted.⁹¹

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Still implicating historical Cayman especially, Michael Craton's *Founded* is a more general work than Bodden's *The Cayman Islands*. Nonetheless, in its generality, Craton has managed to effectively trace the history of the Cayman Islands from the period before permanent settlement in 1734, to the present day in which Cayman represents one of the largest financial centres in the world, boasts a modern, sophisticated services economy, and has a per capita income 'twice that of [its] administering power [Britain]', which

⁹⁰ For good scholarship on the master-slave relationship in Jamaica and Barbados, respectively, see, for instance: Orlando Patterson, *The Sociology of Slavery: An Analysis of the Origins, Development, and Structure of Negro Slave Society in Jamaica* (London: Associated University Press, 1967); Jerome Handler, *Plantation Slavery in Barbados* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 1978).

⁹¹ Craton, *Founded*, p. 410.

does not provide the islands with any monetary aid whatsoever.⁹² Unlike its predecessor *A History of the Cayman Islands*, written by Neville Williams, Craton's *Founded* squeezes deeper insight from historical minutiae in an attempt to present a richer, fuller history. For instance, whereas Williams effectively but briefly outlines the historical underpinnings of Cayman's economic boom in the 1970s,⁹³ Craton devotes chapters thirteen and fourteen to this issue. For instance, balancing "objective" written accounts with "subjective" oral histories, Craton demonstrates both Cayman's enduring historical link with Jamaica, and hints at the ways in which Caymanians began to see themselves as different, especially during the short-lived Federation phase of British West Indian history between 1958 and 1961.⁹⁴ *Founded* proves indispensable to the very logic of this study: by consolidating "objective" historical material while counterpoising it against subjective counterparts, Craton introduces, in essential terms, the idea and process of opposition, of fracture; in the specific case of this study, on either side of any cultural fracture, "objective" understandings of Caymanian culture, as we will see throughout this study, are quick to interpret their oppositional counterparts as prone to subjectivity and thus bias.

⁹² See Howard Fergus, 'The Cayman Islands: Britain's Maverick Caribbean Colony', in *Cayman Islands Country Pre-Prints*, <http://cavehill.uwi.edu/bnccde/cayman/conference/paperdex.html>, June, 2004; August 5, 2005.

⁹³ Williams, *A History*, p. 20.

⁹⁴ Craton, *Founded*, chapters 13 and 14.

Nonetheless, towards a further explanation of the objective-cum-subjective importance of *Founded*, I establish an implied opposing discursive frame which is present in certain portions of Billmyer's 1946 article 'The Cayman Islands'.⁹⁵ By relying on taxonomic language and inferential logic, Billmyer describes how "high-coloured" Caymanians are historically more intelligent and healthier than black Caymanians: 'The majority of the population is of white ... blood ... and a considerable number very blond. Most of the people are hardy and healthy, like their seafaring forefathers from the east coasts of England and Scotland; and as a rule, they are long lived.'⁹⁶ Billmyer's assessment of Caymanians here is crudely restricted to stereotypical ethnocentric understandings of race and ethnicity. Beyond that, he demonstrates an unforgiveable inaccuracy in his understanding of the racial makeup of the Cayman Islands by mid-twentieth century: by 1881, 40% of Grand Cayman's population was of coloured blood and not unadulterated white blood.⁹⁷ Billmyer has, in effect, denied the acculturating creolizing path of the islands' people, thereby propelling his assertions outside of the historical West Indian experience, rendering them imperialist and ultimately illegitimate. However, as imperialist as Billmyer's view may be, it does begin to echo what some believe to be a continued racially segregationist, perhaps endemically imperialist situation in

⁹⁵ James Billmyer, 'The Cayman Islands', in *Geographical Review*, vol.36, no.1 (1946), pp. 574-594.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 34.

⁹⁷ 1881 population statistics taken from Hannerz, *Caymanian Politics*, p. 28.

present-day Cayman society, as forcefully put forward by former government minister Frank McField:

It is my view that race/ class segregation has long been a characteristic of Caymanian society; however, our modern economic and educational development has intensified social exclusion and ghettoisation. As young Willie in *Time Longer Than Rope* (1979) told his sister Eveline: "Mama say that if we don't get a good education Caymans won't belong to us anymore, and we be force to live like Indians on reservations." These reservations Willie feared now exist; they may not be physical but they sure are socio-cultural realities that you can walk into most nights of the week. Therefore, please forgive me for unearthing some historical facts that point to the legacy which fuels the fire.... Those that continue to suggest that there was no slavery in Cayman, and even if there was, it was gentler and did not stratify our society along race and class lines, are terribly mistaken. And it would have been more useful had we had our race debate many years ago, before covert racial and class prejudices eroded our educational and societal reward systems, to the point where many of our youth are exclude and ghettoised⁹⁸

We pick on the idea of the legacies of historical colonialism, if, admittedly, along more cultural lines, as my arguments move into the present. However, unlike Billmyer, Craton legitimately positions the relevance of perceptible historical manifestations on modern Cayman society, first by giving relatively detailed genealogies of the first creolized Caymanians beyond the limited gaze of colour and insofar as scant historical evidence will allow. By relying on historical Jamaican

⁹⁸ Frank McField, 'Commentary: The Legacy of Literacy (Two Petitions from 1840)', in *Cayman Net News*, at http://www.caymannetnews.com/commentary.php?news_id=18737&start=0&category_id=10, October 7, 2009; January 28, 2010.

Colonial Office documents, oral histories, and Hirst's assessment of the first land grants in Grand Cayman, Craton especially illuminates the occupational beginnings of the Foster and Bodden lineages in timber extraction in chapter 3 of his book.⁹⁹ From here, in chapter 4, he brings slavery to bear on these lineages, by stressing the slave's importance both in the island's mahogany and fustic industry and, later, in the cultivation of cotton. Craton also makes the interesting claim that, given the island's predominant coloured society by 1881, many slaves at an earlier date might have been coloured. However, he is quick to contextualize the legal position of miscegenation, widespread though it was throughout the colonial Caribbean: '[w]hile ethnic miscegenation undoubtedly existed [in Cayman]', he begins, 'it probably occurred within the strict limits of custom and outside the bonds of wedlock.'¹⁰⁰

Unlike Billmyer, Craton begins to establish that although racism existed in historical Cayman society, miscegenation played an indispensable role in the social trajectory of Caymanian society from the eighteenth century to the present. *Founded* constitutes an indispensable stepping stone towards assessing Cayman's historical society, as Craton spends more time than both Billmyer and Williams unraveling the social conditions of inchoate Caymanians not just from an economic, racialist and "outsider" standpoint – an imperialist point of view, if you will – but from an insider

⁹⁹ Craton, *Founded*, pp. 33-62.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 75.

position which has been preserved by way of oral histories, especially in the case of the Bodden and Foster families.¹⁰¹ As was earlier alluded to, Craton's inclusion of "subjective" oral histories works to offset a written imperialist objectivity quite biased in its own right, thereby differentiating traditional thought from imposed imperialist pronouncements; or, in the case of sections 3 and 4 of this study, showing where the two can overlap.

It should be here noted that although oral histories may constitute "wrong" statements owing to the possibilities of faulty memory and historical inaccuracy, 'these wrong statements are still psychologically true and this truth may be equally important as [so-called] factually reliable accounts.'¹⁰² The debate over whether oral history represents a valid addition to the present understanding of historical cultural circumstance continues unabated into the twenty-first century. Paul Thompson, Alessandro Portelli, and Trevor Lummis (among others) maintain that oral sources can and do convey reliable information that is not necessarily confined to the often rigid exploratory techniques of academia.¹⁰³ Indeed, many professional cultural studies experts are concerned with implicating "authentic" written sources within the acculturating process and they tend to dismiss oral history as nothing more than

¹⁰¹ See, for instance, Craton, *Founded*, pp. 33-60.

¹⁰² Alessandro Portelli, 'What Makes Oral History Different', in *The Oral History Reader*, edited by R. Perks *et al.* (London: Routledge, 1998), p. 68.

¹⁰³ See Paul Thompson, 'The Voice of the Past', in *The Oral History Reader*, pp. 21-28; Portelli, 'What Makes Oral History Different', pp. 63-74; Trevor Lummis, 'Structure and Validity in Oral Evidence', in *The Oral History Reader*, pp. 273-283.

a reworked present consciousness.¹⁰⁴ Memory, or relayed generational traditional memory, they argue, is simply too faulty and fragmentary; what is remembered is nothing more than a reworking of past events to fit the ideology of a contemporary consciousness. Thus many historians disregard oral history on the grounds that it is inaccurate, biased, and subjective. Yet oral history by its very definition must be seen, at the very least, as positivist for the fact that it is testable, that is, what the informant says can be tested against a perceived reality.¹⁰⁵ Ronald Grele argues that oral history *can* be a vital part of the research project 'by insisting that the highest standards of research and training be expected of oral historians.'¹⁰⁶ Thus the oral historian must also acquaint himself with sound theoretical knowledge, being able to apply this to both primary written and oral sources. However, apart from grounding himself in theory and research methodology, the oral historian's job is more faceted and complicated than this for the fact that his approach to any oral account should involve an additional understanding: individual human thought and experience are shaped by the issues and values produced as a result of human beings living together; this shaping will inevitably determine what is said, left out, brushed over, or mythologized.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁴For more on this understanding see, for instance, Lummis, *Listening to History* (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1988); Susan Blackmore, *Consciousness: A Very Short Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005).

¹⁰⁵ For thorough understandings of positivism, see, for instance, Peter Godfrey-Smith, *Theory and Reality: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Science* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003);

¹⁰⁶ Ronald Grele, 'Movement Without Aim: Methodological and Theoretical Problems in Oral History', in *The Oral History Reader*, p. 41

¹⁰⁷Charles Morrissey, 'On Oral History Interviewing', in *The Oral History Reader*, pp. 107-113.

Smith's *Maritime Heritage* also proves important to my assessment of the historicity of certain cultural and national Caymanian sentiment as it, according to the text on the dust jacket, 'neatly summarize[s] the history and archaeology of these small islands ... covering an array of topics [and especially presenting] a fascinating story of how the sea molded the lives of people inhabiting the small and isolated Cayman Islands.' With regard to the putative understanding that modern Caymanian nationalistic thought sprung from the renowned ability of mostly creolized white and near-white Caymanian sailors, fishermen and turtle-fishers, Smith convincingly demonstrates that a distinct Caymanian culture based on the sea had taken root on Grand Cayman from as early as the late eighteenth century. He positions Cayman's 'first economic system ... [as] a basic one derived from the sea, but dispersed externally', as Caymanian seamen traded their sea produce in exchange for British goods and wares from both Europe and Jamaica.¹⁰⁸

Although *Maritime Heritage* may mourn the loss of the historical seafaring constituent of Caymanian identity, I maintain that the present-day consciousness of established Caymanians is still richly marbled with its antecedent nautical tradition, evident in the fact that many Caymanians of all colours and creeds are as likely to go small-boat sailing, swimming, or fishing in their spare time as they are to engage in

¹⁰⁸ Smith, *The Maritime Heritage*, p. 67.

long conversations about the sea, repetitious of the exploits of a seafaring relative.¹⁰⁹ Roy Bodden accurately positions any such practical historical awareness firmly within the gaze of history when he says, 'Caymanians...used [their] isolation to further hone their navigational and boat building skills. Turtle fishing in the waters surrounding the Cayman Islands became an even more necessary and popular vocation and soon Caymanian sailors were a familiar sight from Pickle Bank to the Miskito Cays.'¹¹⁰

If Smith illuminates the early presence of a distinct and insular Caymanian culture (although he does not really figure the institution of slavery into his arguments), Craton legitimizes this illumination by connecting the official cession of the Cayman Islands to Britain in 1670, as enshrined in the Treaty of Madrid, with a more formalized attachment between Cayman and Jamaica almost two centuries later in 1865.¹¹¹ Indeed, when the Cayman Islands became dependent on the British Crown – via Jamaica – upon the signing of the Treaty of Madrid, Jamaica's apparently immediate neglect of the Cayman Islands after 1670 to 1865 helped to create a distinct Caymanian culture, which, according to Bodden, Smith, and Craton, was shaped by the tenacious will to adapt in a relatively barren and harsh existence. Indeed, it was such humble origins, asserts Hannerz, which proved responsible for

¹⁰⁹ This assertion is based on my own experiences with other Caymanians as a Caymanian myself.

¹¹⁰ Bodden, *The Cayman Islands*, p. 14.

¹¹¹ Craton, *Founded*, pp. 150-151.

the spawning of Cayman's sea merchant elite, which continued to exercise its political and doctrinal clout well into the second half of the twentieth century, as well as providing Cayman's economic mainstay, in the form of remittances, before the economic boom of the 1970s.¹¹² However, we should not lose sight here of the fact of the presence of a racist ideology on the historical Cayman Islands made practical by slaveholding. Unfortunately, unlike W. Jeffrey Bolster's *Black Jacks: African American Seamen in the Age of Sail*,¹¹³ there is simply not enough historical information with which to chronicle the palpable black (and general non-white) presence in a decidedly European seafaring tradition throughout seventeenth and eighteenth-century Cayman. However, given that by April of 1834, 5% of Grand Cayman's slave population was utilized as enslaved mariners they were bound to leave some sort of imprint upon a largely white and near-white occupational existence.¹¹⁴

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Unless this literature review seems to devote too many pages to my historical background, I should here reiterate that most scholarly works on Cayman are historical in nature. Only Bodden, and to a lesser extent, Craton and Amit, have made any meaningful efforts to ideologically situate present-day Caymanians both within their traditional and multicultural contexts. With this noticeable scholarly

¹¹² See Hannerz, *Caymanian Politics*, chapter 11.

¹¹³ W. Jeffrey Bolster, *Black Jacks: African American Seamen in the Age of the Sail* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997).

¹¹⁴ See PRO, T71/243 Caymanas Slave Returns, April 2, 1834.

dearth in mind, we now look at my second and third intentions, which involve the assessment of present-day cultural, traditional, modern, xenophobic and nationalistic lines of thought.

Bodden's understanding in relation to these intentions is limited either to the ideological connection between modern Caymanian racism or racialism and antecedent equivalents, or the fact that any extant socio-ethnic tension exists 'between some Caymanians and some expatriates.'¹¹⁵ Rather, it is my contention that Caymanians – as enshrined in black, white, and coloured bodies – are not represented in any monolithic nationalist and cultural force, but seem to splinter along modern and traditional lines, any such splinter I initially pose in the form of two questions: first, do established Caymanians tend to agree on the diluting effects of globalisation on their traditional and cultural way of life? And, second, is there such a thing as a strong traditional Caymanian way of life when we consider that the Caymanian population barely outnumbers expatriates who have brought along their own cultural sensibilities? A social condition of this nature is further enforced in the fact that the islands' workforce as of July 2009 was 55% expatriate.¹¹⁶

Despite his underdeveloped thoughts in the area of intra-Caymanian and Caymanian-expatriate tensions on Cayman soil, Bodden has nonetheless helped to

¹¹⁵ Bodden, *The Cayman Islands*, p.46.

¹¹⁶ See James Dimond, 'Recession avoided – for now', in *The Caymanian Compass*, at <http://www.caycompass.com/cgi-bin/CFPnews.cgi?ID=10383591>, July 1, 2009; July 10, 2009.

lay the foundation for my own research with his illuminating discussion of the “local/expat issue” in the Cayman Islands in the second chapter of his book. Together with my own experiences growing up in Cayman, I have located in Bodden’s argument the presence of what one article has referred to as the great divide between expatriates and Caymanians.¹¹⁷ From the outset, such a reference inevitably highlights a reasonable theoretical understanding that Caymanian nationalist discourse, regarded by some as selectively xenophobic and, by default, racist to its core,¹¹⁸ has resulted from a lopsided dialogue between Caymanians and “others”; this dialogue is indeed shaped by economic forces and considerations – ‘[h]ardworking are Caymanians being pushed to the limit and are underpaid while their foreign counterparts reap the bonuses, the perks, and much more’¹¹⁹ – and noticeable racialized understandings of a people that are 60% mixed race¹²⁰ – ‘People of color in Cayman do not think of themselves as black and will be offended to be considered black...This sets people from Cayman apart from people from Jamaica...But if you get a Caymanian to be honest with you they will share this. So to

¹¹⁷ See Le Femme Caymanian, ‘The Great Divide: Expats vs. Caymanians, in *CNS Viewpoint: Cayman News Service*, at <http://www.caymannewsservice.com/viewpoint/2009/06/08/great-divide-expats-vs-caymanians>, June 8, 2009; August 3, 2010.

¹¹⁸ For a deeper understanding of the ways in which racialism/racism can be regarded as an indispensable component of certain nationalist movements, see Robert Miles, ‘Recent Marxist Theories of Nationalism and the Issue of Racism’, *The British Journal of Sociology*, vol.38, no.1 (1987), pp. 24-43.

¹¹⁹ See Anonymous, ‘Commentary: The article is very well...’, in Le Femme Caymanian, ‘The Great Divide.’

¹²⁰ The *CIA World Factbook* states that 40% of Caymanians are mixed race, while 20% are black and 20% white with the remaining 20% consisting of expatriates of various ethnic groups. Taking only the Caymanian people into account, I have recalculated these figures accordingly. See *The CIA World Factbook*, ‘The Cayman Islands’, at <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/cj.html>, 2010; August 3, 2010.

pretend skin color means nothing among Caymanians is mendacity at its finest.’¹²¹

Bodden has effectively positioned such a discourse – constantly creating, modifying and sustaining Caymanian nationalism – as emanating from a continual struggle that properly began in the early 1970s, when Cayman was experiencing the beginnings of its economic boom.¹²²

However, after any such acknowledgement of an apparent Caymanian-Jamaican struggle especially, Bodden’s subsequent assertions become unfounded claims. For instance, he supposes that this discourse has not only been internalized by its interpellators (Caymanians, Jamaicans, and other foreign-nationals alike) towards a disparate racial and economic social hierarchy but also has “silently” defined the imperatives of the economic and institutional frameworks of the Cayman Islands.¹²³ Without rigor, Bodden also claims a ‘symbiotic relationship between...white expatriates and Caymanians who work in the financial industry and the large law firms.’ Bodden also attempts, without statistical data, to explain how such a relationship is numerically dominated by expatriate whites, whose “imposed”

¹²¹ See Anonymous, ‘Commentary: What has yet to be identified’, in Gary Younge, ‘Not while racism exists’, in *Cayman News Service*, at <http://www.caymannewsservice.com/world-view/2010/03/10/not-while-racism-exists>, March 10, 2010; August 3, 2010.

¹²² See Christopher Williams, ‘Understanding Caymanianness Towards the Nationalist Collective Consciousness’, unpublished MA thesis (University of Manchester, 2006).

¹²³ Bodden, *The Cayman Islands*, pp. 51-69

differential culture and social understandings have not been ‘viewed by Caymanians as an illegitimate foreign domination.’¹²⁴

Building on Bodden’s local/expatriate argument, in spite of its various shortcomings, and largely foregoing any colour considerations, I demonstrate in my fourth section the extent to which Caymanians are torn between more traditional, xenophobic and nationalist thought, and a more modern thought keener to appreciate incoming nationals as a necessary outworking of economic and cultural globalisation. My conclusion chapter in Section 3 provides the initial analysis for this tear, as it strives to map that point in Cayman’s social, cultural, and economic history when traditional Caymanian considerations of Jamaica and Jamaicans underwent a shift from love and respect to suspicion, intolerance, and perhaps even hatred.

In the continued effort to contextualize the conflict between modern and traditional Caymanian thought while continuing to privilege the traditional standpoint throughout the following few paragraphs, many letters to the editor in local newspapers demonstrate that new Caymanians have been negatively “othered” in what I consider to be an evolved, reworked traditional Caymanian consciousness;¹²⁵

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, p.57.

¹²⁵ See, for instance, Kimberly Arch, ‘Letter To The Editor: What is the problem with new Caymanians?’, in *Cayman Net News*, at <http://www.caymannetnews.com/cgi-script/csArticles/articles/000033/003336.htm>, June 27, 2006; September 7, 2010; Gordon Barlow, ‘What’s in a name?:Viewpoint’, in *Cayman News Service*, at <http://www.caymannewsservice.com/viewpoint/2009/12/28/what%E2%80%99s-name>, December 28, 2009; September 7, 2010. Concerning my initial idea of an evolved, reworked traditional Caymanian consciousness, see pp.5-7.

the new Caymanian – also more derogatively known as the paper Caymanian – represents a foreign national who has proved him or herself eligible for Caymanian citizenship either through residency or marriage. Given the large number of grants of Caymanian citizenship in 2003 – over 2500 grants in total¹²⁶ – many established Caymanians expressed their disgust that this political move would have disastrous consequences including the further dilution of an already inundated Caymanian cultural way of life. One wonders, for instance, if this sort of sentiment was ultimately responsible for the fact that since 2005 Jamaicans have had to obtain a visa if they wish to enter the Cayman Islands;¹²⁷ furthermore, the point system for permanent residency automatically works against Jamaicans because there are more of them in Cayman – over 11,000 by December 2007¹²⁸ – than any other foreign nationals may, arguably, be said to exemplify such a nationalist discourse in

¹²⁶ Throughout 2003, the ruling UDP granted what many Caymanians considered to be an inordinate number of status grants. The UDP justified these grants by pointing out that they had been coming under increasing pressure from the United Kingdom for their contravention of human rights commitments on the grounds that many foreign nationals had long been eligible for Caymanian status but were being refused this status on largely xenophobic grounds. However, the opposition PPM rejected this justification, instead keen to view these grants as a means by which the UDP could garner more votes in the upcoming 2005 general elections. See, for instance, 'PPM: Status Grants A Scandal', in *Cayman Net News*, at

<http://www.caymannetnews.com/Archive/Archive%20Articles/October%202003/Issue%20520%20Wed/520-stories.html>, October 20, 2003; July 13, 2009.

¹²⁷ For a greater understanding of this immigration requirement of Jamaicans, and the controversy it has ignited, see, for instance, Catherine MacGillivray, 'Patterson warns against discrimination', in the *Caymanian Compass*, <http://www.caycompass.com/cgi-bin/CFPnews.cgi?ID=1008354>, October 23, 2005; July 13, 2009; Alan Markoff, 'Bush: visa issue causing disunity', in the *Caymanian Compass*, <http://www.caycompass.com/cgi-bin/CFPnews.cgi?ID=1008459>, October 26, 2005; July 13, 2009; The Editor, 'Today's Editorial Oct.25: The Elephant in the Room', in the *Caymanian Compass*, <http://www.caycompass.com/cgi-bin/CFPnews.cgi?ID=1008395>, October 25, 2005; July 13, 2009.

¹²⁸ See ESO, 'Immigration Data: Work Permits 2008', at <http://www.eso.ky/pages.php?page=immigrationdata>, 2010; February 1, 2010.

action.¹²⁹ Therefore, given that expressive evidence abounds for a decidedly nationalist xenophobic viewpoint, I assess the interplay between this viewpoint and its not immediately recognized modern counterpart; an interplay of this nature effectively introduces an intra-Caymanian tension shorn between traditionalism and the modern need for progress. The distillation of such localized conditions and attitudes may, in certain instances, implicate my line of thought – which is indebted to Amit's ideas – of a threatened nationalist Caymanian-reflexivity anxious to validate the importance of selective immigration practices within a paradoxical embrace of a prosperous lifestyle which is indebted to globalisation and by extension multiculturalism, and all in the name of a monolithic view of Caymanian identity, no less.¹³⁰ By Caymanian-reflexivity, I am referring to the 'regular exercise of the mental ability, shared by [the Caymanian] people, to consider themselves in relation to their (social) contexts and vice versa';¹³¹ this reflexivity returns to the ultimate question which Caymanianness asks, that is, who is a Caymanian?

It is true that Neville Williams provided the pretext for the shaping of this nationalist discourse up to 1970, when Cayman still used and depended on Jamaican currency

¹²⁹ At the end of 2006, there were 11,000 Jamaicans on Grand Cayman with work permits, representing 69% of the total expatriate labour force. See Brent Fuller, 'Discrimination non-existent', in the *Caymanian Compass*, <http://www.caycompass.com/cgi-bin/CFPnews.cgi?ID=1028733>, February 21, 2008; July 10, 2009.

¹³⁰ See Amit, 'A Clash of Vulnerabilities', pp. 574-594.

¹³¹ Margaret S. Archer, *Making Our Way through the World: Human Reflexivity and Social Mobility* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), p. 25.

but was showing signs of economically outgrowing its erstwhile surrogate mother.¹³² When I compared the information offered by Williams with other primary sources, I concluded in my master's thesis that during the 1970s many Caymanians began to regard Jamaican culture with disdain, primarily because of the new perception of Jamaica's economic, political, and moral decline, thereafter clinging to the embrace of an older Caymanian seafaring culture.¹³³ This cultural embrace, although well intentioned, seemed also to be well timed, being much informed by notions of traditional British-ness (such notions including Christianity and the emphasis on family ties and family values) but undergirded as well by the modernizing influences of American cultural hegemony. Not only did this confirm a growing nativist cultural consciousness synthesizing local and foreign elements, it also came to reveal the modern Caymanian's somewhat schizoid loyalty to all things British especially. I say schizoid for, on the one hand, many Caymanians like very much to vaunt the fact – be it true or false – that they are a self-sustaining country with more wealth than Britain and many other so-called developed countries; yet on the other, there has never been any loud Caymanian advocacy of independence from Great Britain. Here rests my idea, spawned in part by Thorndike's own argument, that given Caymanians' suspicion of change, together with Cayman's economic prosperity, the islands' connection with the politically stable "motherland" is viewed by Caymanians as necessary to the perpetuation of the islands' prosperity.¹³⁴ This idea begins to reveal the extent to which Caymanians have – beyond the gaze of a

¹³² Williams, *A History*, pp. 84-86.

¹³³ See footnote 122.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*

xenophobic nativism – sacrificed the pursuit of cultural distinction for the enticement of economic superiority.¹³⁵

Section 4's final section, then, focuses on the annual festivals of Pirates Week and Carnival Batabano (from here on referred to as Batabano) and how they provide the bases for any subsequent assessment of conflicting Caymanian cultural sentiments. That these are national festivals of the Cayman Islands, which are by default, and for better or worse, understood in cultural terms, they serve as useful indices towards the unraveling of a line of thought dedicated to shedding light on any opposing discourse on Cayman soil. Judith Butler's understanding of performativity becomes very important at this juncture. Performativity as concept denotes the ways in which speech, or discourse, is bound to become symptomatic – in this case – of a cultural activity thought to be "authentic." Normalization of a cultural idea or act therefore becomes dependent not so much on an arbitrarily constructed discourse, but upon the reiteration – or iterativity as Jacques Derrida meant it – of enabling or disabling articles of speech.¹³⁶ Indeed, there is nothing arbitrary about any Caymanian who,

¹³⁵ This "schizoid" loyalty of which I speak has continued to manifest itself in at least six of my more recent interviews with established Caymanians.

¹³⁶ Judith Butler uses the term performativity to describe discourses that generate the materiality of sex and the body. However, the likes of Stuart Hall, Homi Bhabha and Paul Gilroy, among others, have as much as implicated the postmodern concept in their writings; in other words, they position the indispensability of discourse as enablers or limiters of non-western cultures, a condition which returns to Derrida's understanding that everyday speech and discourse are comprised of binaries (that is, good and evil, black and white, good and bad, etc. See Judith Butler, *Bodies that Matter: On the Discursive Limits of Sex* (New York: Routledge, 1993); see also Stuart Hall, *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices* (London: Sage Publications & Open University, 1997); *Questions of Cultural Identity*, edited by Stuart Hall et al. (London: Sage Publications, 1996); Paul Gilroy *The Black*

with great cultural conviction, will, say, claim Pirates Week to be distinctly Caymanian, while another Caymanian would reject any such profession on the grounds that the carnival is lewd, unwholesome, imported, and thus intensely unhistorical and without local tradition. Although both sentiments represent diametrically opposing viewpoints, the seeming official nature of their profession confirms their reliance on repetition if they are to survive. For instance, those Caymanians professing a cultural affinity for Batabano's Wet Fete or Street Masquerade, would be affirming – and through the years, re-affirming – the importance of dance, expression, and creativity to Caymanian culture, an affirmation which would have partly located its legitimacy in the intention of its founders – the Rotary Club – to create a local carnivalesque event to draw everyone together in the name of unity and fun. Likewise, other Caymanians more keen to culturally identify with, for instance, Pirates Week's District Heritage Days, occasions on which Caymanian ways of old, like caboose cooking, thatch palm tapestry, catboat exhibitions, etc., would have connected any relevant traditional identification with repetitive verbal expressions undergirding an internal conviction that Caymanian heritage be preserved at all cost. The point here is not only does a dedicated cultural act or attitude receive its sense of legitimacy from its promoting discourse, but

Atlantic: Modernity and Double-Consciousness (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 1993); *Postcolonial Melancholia* (Columbia, Columbia University Press, 2006); Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (New York: Routledge, 2004); see also Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, translated by Gayatri Spivak (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997 reprint).

potentially opposing Caymanian cultural discourses set the basis for a truly dynamic, perhaps at times intense, dialogical situation.

Yet this dialogic does not only apply to culture, but must also encompass any nationalist framework which would have made such a Caymanian-Caymanian cultural opposition possible in the first place. Let us here consider a working definition of what I refer to as “closed” nationalism and its legitimating tools of culture and tradition. By closed nationalism, I am referring, like Eric Hobsbawm, to a specifically local (or national) process by which the nation in question strives to retain its cultural singularity in the face of an inundating globalising force.¹³⁷ We may include here the assertion of the eminent scholar of nationalism, Ernest Gellner, that any such brand of nationalism ‘maintains that similarity of culture is the basic social bond [of a people].’¹³⁸ The reliance on such an idea would, in the first instance, witness its most intense authenticity in the face of an incoming, overwhelming “other” culture or cultures. Nonetheless, where Hobsbawm locates the beginnings of closed nationalism after 1870 as a response to a prevailing liberal nationalism keen on unification by expansion (as with Germany and Italy especially), my understanding of a perceptibly closed Caymanian nationalism locates its origins in the 1970s.¹³⁹ Indeed, it was in the early 1970s that Cayman’s economy was effectively opened up to globalising forces, due in large part to earlier legislation which, sanctioned by the islands’ overlord, Britain, made it both

¹³⁷ Eric Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism Since 1780: Programme, Myth and Reality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

¹³⁸ Ernest Gellner, *Nationalism* (New York: New York University Press, 1997), p. 3.

¹³⁹ Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism*, chapter 1.

possible to attract foreign investors who were keen to not be “unduly” taxed and create a high to middle-end tourist market centered around swimming, diving, and boating.¹⁴⁰ It is at this point in Cayman’s cultural history that globalisation was introduced as the phenomenon refers to the sociological ways in which the movement of capital and its human purveyors will provide a cultural counterpoint to conservative local ideas centered on traditional culture; any such provision, as we have earlier seen in this introduction, is further underpinned by the phenomenon of multiculturalism, and Sections 3 and 4 illustrate the ways in which incoming cultural influences are bound to disrupt traditional cultural understandings in the context of the following assertion, largely based on the ideas of M. Featherstone: ‘Whereas local culture is closely tied to place and time, global culture is free of these constraints: as such it is “disconnected,” “disembedded” and “de-territorialized,” existing outside the usual reference to geographical territory.’¹⁴¹

It is precisely because of the phenomenon of multiculturalism that Craton stresses that ‘...[r]ecent decades have seen a growing preoccupation with Caymanian identity – with recognizing, preserving, and celebrating it.’¹⁴² Indeed, incoming multi-national corporations (especially banks in the Cayman context), investors, professionals and other blue collared workers, by their very numbers and cultural

¹⁴⁰ Craton, *Founded*, chapter 15.

¹⁴¹ Quoted in John Beynon *et al.*, *Globalization*, p. 13.

¹⁴² Craton, *Founded*, p. 410.

sensibilities, work to decentre legitimate traditional Caymanian sentiments, not so much deliberately as a matter of globalizing course. Nonetheless, where the concept of traditionalism can imply a deliberate romanticized construction of the past,¹⁴³ we should anticipate any traditional Caymanian understanding – evolved and otherwise – as potentially subject to mythical exaggerations for the sake of preserving a Caymanian identity rooted in the past; within this nationalist, traditional, and cultural preservation lurks a potentially anti-globalised, anti-multicultural movement. An anti-global movement can refer to a subtle collaborative effort between the immigration branch of government and various local businesses to regulate the number of foreign immigrants coming into the islands.¹⁴⁴ Given its potential need to control the influx of incomers, thereby concurrently stemming the dilution of the local culture, any such enabling anti-globalisation discourse could reflect an ultimately xenophobic intent. In the Cayman context, then, any such nationalist, xenophobic discourse could become very problematic for its potentially deliberate ignorance of what Susan George has termed the ‘globalization of human rights’ – the doctrine that incoming foreign national workers should be just as entitled to basic human rights and fair treatment as indigenous or established peoples.¹⁴⁵ Beyond this, lurks another issue of potential xenophobic proportions, and

¹⁴³ See Sedgwick, *Against the Modern World*, pp. 32-36.

¹⁴⁴ Greg Buckman, *Globalization: Tame it or Scrap it?* (Bangalore: Books for Change, 2004), p.195.

¹⁴⁵ George argues that ‘neoliberal globalization is incompatible with the globalization of human rights’ (p.15) for the simple fact that not every incoming worker will be financially privileged. Rather, the incoming “have -nots” would be more likely to be exploited given their desperation, or even their illegal status, conditions which would drastically affect their human rights. See Susan George,

which is illuminated in the fact that economic prosperity came to the Cayman Islands only after the fact of a substantial foreign influence on the islands' rather closed, remittances-based economy. In light of this issue, I establish an analytic base which drives my second and third intentions: on the one hand, is any traditional, xenophobic and exclusivist Caymanian stance automatically impugned by its entitlement to a present way of life not entirely of the Caymanians' making? On the other hand, however, to what extent do modern, globally thinking Caymanians often run the risk of "enjoying the financial ride" without exhibiting any true ancestral cultural grounding? Is their cultural grounding, like that of many "opportunistic," multicultural incoming expatriates, substantively rooted elsewhere or nowhere at all? Indeed, any substantial incoming capital to the Cayman Islands, then, has always been accompanied by large expatriate numbers. If we look at the statistical fact that towards the end of 2008, almost 65,000 people lived in the Cayman Islands, and Caymanians represented around half of this, at 32,367, we begin to anticipate the ways in which incoming cultural ways of doing, thinking and being will automatically come into conflict with settled counterparts.¹⁴⁶

Thus we are at this juncture confronted with the very real understandings of some Caymanians that Pirates Week and Batabano are not truly Caymanian but created

'Globalizing Rights?', in *Globalizing Rights*, edited by Matthew Gibney (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), pp.15-33.

¹⁴⁶ See Brent Fuller, 'Cayman's population tops 60,000', in the *Caymanian Compass*, <http://www.caycompass.com/cgi-bin/CFPnews.cgi?ID=1032528>, August 3, 2008.

specifically for what is understood to be the globalising forces of tourism and multiculturalism. Craton's suggestion that the islands' authorities have 'sought to project an image of their past which would be attractive to tourists' becomes very important here. Especially implicating '...the exploitation of the pirate's image...in order to attract tourists...', Craton begins to show how '...such projections can distort the past and ignore the harsher realities of history.' For instance, although there is evidence of pirates' landings in Cayman throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Craton explains that many Caymanians continue to enthusiastically celebrate Pirates Week, ignorant of the fact that the islands were 'never a true pirate lair.'¹⁴⁷ The potential implication here is that some Caymanians are more inclined to celebrate historical maritime piracy than, say, slavery, because unlike slavery the concept of historical piracy has undergone significant romanticization through the centuries. When the piratical image is evoked at Pirates Week, it is perhaps not the ravenous, rampaging historical image of the pirate, but a romanticized image which describes pirates as intense adventurers determined to survive in spite of any opposition. Thus by focusing on Pirates Week, are certain Caymanians, according to the likes of Frank McField, ignoring the social and cultural actualities of slavery and its institution on their ancestors, even on their social and cultural selves?¹⁴⁸ In my analyses of Batabano and Pirates Week in Section 4 especially, I attempt, respectively, to illustrate the effects of a slave-influenced

¹⁴⁷ Craton, *Founded*, p. 410.

¹⁴⁸ See footnote 98.

carnival and historical maritime piracy on Caymanian traditional and modern sentiment alike.

Although Craton does not make any mention of the effects of Batabano on a present Caymanian cultural identity, we may nonetheless here apply the subtle underpinnings of his understanding of the a-historicity of Pirates Week – together with McField’s more explicit historical ideas – to the ways in which historical circumstance is bound to leave some sort of impression, or non-impression for that matter, on the social and cultural milieus in the present.¹⁴⁹ Therefore, as batabano refers to the tracks made by a female turtle as she crawls along the beach to lay her eggs inland, do Caymanians celebrate the festival solely for its historical value? Or is there a more modern reason for celebrating Batabano which begins to locate its basis in the – at times – irresistible effects of multiculturalism – that is, the consolidation of many cultural influences in the name of revelry – together with the economic pull of tourism? Where Batabano and Pirates Week are concerned, I especially intend to show, on the one hand, how the incoming cultural influences, as represented in what is considered as lewdness and unwholesome carnivalesque behaviour, become the antithesis of a Caymanian tradition priding itself on propriety and conservativeness; on the other hand, however, I strive to determine the extent of the investment of modern thinking Caymanians in such behaviour in cultural terms.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

Yet “unsavoury” foreignness need not be limited merely to the considerations of Pirates Week and Batabano, but is poised to assume a paradoxically intermediary role in *any* split Caymanian ideological groundwork: in other words, I show how the very presence of “overwhelming” foreigners on Cayman soil, for some Caymanians, would represent a breach of a traditional way of life, while other Caymanians, working firmly within the defining principles of globalisation would, in theory, seem hardly concerned with any such preponderance, viewing it as a price to pay for the sake of economic progress.

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All of the above has attempted to anticipate the potential result of the unfinished project of a monolithic Caymanian cultural and national consciousness. This further implies the fractured nature of Caymanianness: to reiterate, when I speak of Caymanianness, I am speaking of that uncompromising sense of belonging entitlement pulsing at the heart of any self-actuating, sustained cultural identity, and which continually asks questions like: who is a Caymanian? Why am I Caymanian? Why aren’t you a Caymanian? and so on.¹⁵⁰ That Caymanianness may be torn between traditional and modern notions, do the above representative cultural and national stances become coterminous with Stuart Hall’s conception that ‘identification as a construction [is] a process never completed = always “in

¹⁵⁰ See footnote 8.

process?'"¹⁵¹ In an age where the postmodern conditions of identity fragmentation, fluidity, discontinuity and change are effortlessly disseminated and espoused, a unique opposition of identification seems to have emerged among many Caymanians. Where *identity* connotes a complete process predicated upon various characteristics which serve as representative facts for a particular group of people, *identification* can represent the process leading to any such facts. As we explore this concept further, it is worth quoting Stuart Hall: '[i]dentification is constructed on the back of a recognition of some common origin or shared characteristics with another person or group, or with an ideal, and with the natural closure of solidarity and allegiance established on this foundation.'¹⁵²

Therefore, and in conclusion, it should be appreciated that in their ongoing traditional and modern identifications, Caymanians will, and do, share 'equal respect' – as Homi Bhabha meant it – based on some sense of a common origin and shared characteristics. Bhabha has implied that any such respect is only enabled when cultural differences (as enshrined in the process to identification) are supported by borderline negotiations which reveal '...types of culture-sympathy...' ¹⁵³ or, as I am inclined to understand it, cultural agreements. Beginning, then, to highlight cultural agreements among fractured Caymanian cultural and national understandings, a condition which, for

¹⁵¹ Stuart Hall, 'Who Needs Identity?', in *Questions of Cultural Identity*, edited by Stuart Hall *et al.* (London: Sage Publications, 1996), p. 2.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 2.

¹⁵³ Homi Bhabha, 'Culture's In-Between', in *Questions of Cultural Identity*, p. 54.

better or worse, automatically ensures their constant negotiation, I agree – theoretically – that many established Caymanians, as with all other nationalities, are essentially united by their perceived sense of a national commonality, if nothing else. They would, for instance, be aware, subconsciously or otherwise, that their ancestors spoke the same language in a unique dialect made possible for the fact that they were largely allowed to develop independently of the British Crown via the Jamaican Assembly to 1865.¹⁵⁴ In primary and secondary school, Caymanian children would have been introduced to a brief overview of their islands' past, and would have been privy to relatively frequent visits of older Caymanians, like Ms. Janet for instance,¹⁵⁵ so invited to demonstrate a Caymanian “way of old” like silver thatch tapestry; such efforts, in theory, would have bestowed them general understandings of what it would have meant to be a traditional Caymanian, thereby at the very least providing a psychological link to their immediate ancestors. The mandatory singing of the national song at certain social functions like graduations, school assemblies, and official government events would have also served as an emblem of a singular Caymanianness and perhaps because the status quo has always dictated that when sung, one is to be stood at attention in deference to the sacred words of an equally sacred culture. Nonetheless, by paying particular attention to the forces of globalisation, I strive throughout section 4 especially to identify the sentimental intersections where these cultural agreements have broken down into opposing cultural viewpoints.

¹⁵⁴ For thorough discussions on any such historical isolation, see Craton, *Founded*, chapter 7.

¹⁵⁵ See ‘West Bay Heritage Day’, in *Cayman Net News*, <http://www.caymannetnews.com/Archive/Archive%20Articles/October%202003/Issue%20521%20Thu/521-stories.html#News8>, October 28, 2003; July 10, 2009.

In the final analysis, as I seek to better understand Caymanian nationalist, national, and cultural lines of thought from the vantage points of history, and traditional and modern thought in the present, the use of various primary source accounts should give me deeper insight into the evolutions of a distinct Caymanian national consciousness from around the mid-eighteenth century to the present. These primary source materials include oral histories, various government publications, public records, personal interviews, and newspaper articles. Thus when such primary sources are underpinned by the secondary sources just discussed and other secondary resources theoretically and practically relevant to my research, the following points, by study's end, should have been adequately illustrated:

- The historicity/a-historicity of certain Caymanian cultural and national[ist] ways of thinking in the present.
- The general distinctions between established Caymanians and Paper Caymanians in the minds of established Caymanians especially.
- How established Caymanians especially defined themselves against the concept of *home* to and beyond 1962, the year of Jamaica's independence.
- The rhetorical ways in which established Caymanians retained a distinct cultural identity and how this was either sustained or lost in the deluge of incoming cultural influences.
- The progressively interceding and perceived "transgressive" role that global capitalism has played on an established Caymanian way of life.

There has hardly been a process, in a period capable of reconstruction by historians from literary sources, which has unfolded in such a decisive manner and which is associated with such dramatic changes as the one which continued to unfold in the Caribbean after...[Christopher Columbus first sighted parts of what was to *become* the Caribbean in 1492] (Pietschmann 1999, p. 1).

2.1 Introduction

Although it is my contention that the brunt of traditional, and later, xenophobic Caymanian thought is mainly located in the sixth phase of Caymanian history (the 1880s to c. 1960s), what immediately follows provides further historical grounding for the social, economic, and cultural development of both the Caymanian people and traditional Caymanian thought patterns. Of the latter development, we should remain mindful of the possibility that traditional sentiment in the present can be influenced by aspects of an earlier historical phase, and so I strive to provide a fairly complete historical foundation in light of this possibility. Thus, this historical overview is important to the wider concerns of this study as important historical themes preceding the sixth phase, like maritime activity and slavery, as we shall see in Sections 3 and 4, continue to inform both traditional and modern Caymanian thought in varying degrees of subtlety. Furthermore, parts of this historical assessment especially strive to counter Roy Bodden's hypothesis that Cayman's

second historical phase represented not a slave society but a society with slaves.¹ Indeed, the very connection between Bodden's respected line of thought and its corresponding historical phase provides a theoretical framework that can be applied in Sections 3 and 4 towards determining the extent to which certain periods of Caymanian history have been embraced, overlooked, and/or reworked in a Caymanian cultural-national[ist] imagination torn between the modern and the traditional.

2.2 Phase One: 1503–1734: Sighting, Temporary Settlement, and Resource Exploitation

The sister islands of Cayman Brac and Little Cayman were sighted by Christopher Columbus on May 10, 1503 (we cannot be certain when Grand Cayman was first sighted by Europeans, but in 1586 English Captain and Privateer Sir Francis Drake and his fleet found themselves in that island on a two day layover²).³ Uninhabited, these islands remained relatively worthless Spanish New World properties until 1655, when the English seized Spanish Jamaica and in their efforts gained all three Cayman Islands.⁴ Nonetheless, from 1658 to 1670, the islands' reputation for turtle –

¹ Personal Interview with Roy Bodden, October 12, 2008, p.4.

² Michael Craton, *He Hath Founded it Upon the Seas* (Kingston: Ian Randle Publishers, 2003), p.17.

³ Although it is very unlikely that Amerindians resided in the Cayman Islands prior to Columbus's sighting of the sister islands given the lack of historical evidence, this does not mean that the islands were not first 'sighted' – or even utilised – by indigenous groups in the region at an earlier time. See Ferdinand Columbus, *The Life of the Admiral Christopher Columbus by his son Ferdinand*, translated by Benjamin Keen (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1958), p.64.

⁴ For detailed accounts of the circumstances surrounding the Cayman's Islands' cession to England in 1655, see Craton, *Founded*, chapter 2; See also Neville Williams, *A History of the Cayman Islands* (George Town: Cayman Islands Government, 1970), pp. 1-17.

a reputation in place since the previous century – led to Little Cayman’s temporary settlement.⁵ Although it has been widely believed that Cayman Brac was also settled at this time, there is no conclusive evidence here. However, we can be certain that the village on Little Cayman was a coastal one consisting of at least twenty thatched dwellings, which had its own governor who was referred to as Captain Ary.⁶ Based on incomplete archeological evidence, Roger Smith has conjectured that these dwellings were not permanent ones but were used by fishermen who came to Little Cayman at certain times during the year to fish and catch turtle.⁷ The governor may have simply just been an overseer, especially at a time when Spanish-Anglo tensions were high and these fishermen would have needed added protection.

Nonetheless, in July 1670, just before Thomas Lynch was to replace Thomas Modyford as Jamaica’s governor, the Jamaican Council issued a proclamation to the settlers on Little Cayman, pardoning the ‘divers Soldiers, Planters...[and] Privateers [of their] past irregular Actions...’ if they returned to Jamaica within one year of its

⁵ The nature of early, temporary settlement on Little Cayman is not sufficiently documented to be given comprehensive treatment. However, given that by 1669, HMS *Hopewell* and its captain Samuel Hutchinson was dispatched to Little Cayman to protect the interest of seamen there, together with the mention of a governor Ary as ‘Governor’ of Caymanas, it should be accepted that some form of settlement was in place on little Cayman, Cayman Brac, or both islands at this time. See especially ‘Deposition of Captain Hutchinson’, June 16, 1669, PRO, CO 1/25, f.151.

⁶ When Spanish Privateer Rivero Pardal conducted a successful raid on the tiny coastal village of Little Cayman in April of 1669, three months later in July, he penned, ‘I went on shoare at Caymanos, and fought with Captain Ary and burned twenty houses.’ See ‘River Pardal’s Reprisal Commission’, July 5, 1670, PRO, CO 1/25, f.5; See also Roger Smith, *The Maritime Heritage of the Cayman Islands* (Gainesville, University Press of Florida, 2000) pp. 89-95.

⁷ Smith, *The Maritime Heritage*, pp. 93-94

issue.⁸ In light of the proclamation, the commissioner to the Cayman Islands between 1907 and 1912, George Hirst, made the supposition that the class of settlers on Little Cayman was too dangerous to leave alone for prolonged periods of time, hinting perhaps at their piratical proclivities;⁹ it is also likely that Jamaican historian Edward Long was speaking about these settlers in his 1774 assertion that the ‘present race of inhabitants [on Grand Cayman] are said to be descendants of the British Bucaniers...[sic].’¹⁰ Former Deputy Keeper of British Public Records Neville Williams offered another suggestion in 1970: Little Cayman’s total evacuation was necessary given the island’s isolation and thus vulnerability to Spanish attack.¹¹ Indeed, on April 14, 1669, Spanish privateer Rivero Pardal conducted a successful raid on the village of Little Cayman, burning twenty of its dwellings to the ground and boasting of the incident in his challenge to Henry Morgan three months later.¹²

2.3 Phase Two: 1734 – 1834: Was Grand Cayman a Seafaring Society, a Slave Society, or a Society with Slaves? Confronting Roy Bodden’s Anti-Slavocratic Sentiment

In light of a fading piratical threat, the promise of a vibrant mahogany and fustic enterprise, and an abundance of turtles in surrounding waters, 1734 roughly marked the era of permanent settlement in Grand Cayman. Between 1734 and 1741

⁸ See ‘Resolution of the Jamaican Council, Port Royal’, June 12, 1671, PRO, CO 140/1, ff. 223-5.

⁹ George S.S Hirst, *Notes on the History of the Cayman Islands* (Grand Cayman: Cayman Islands Government, 1967 first published in 1910), p.74.

¹⁰ Edward Long, *The History of Jamaica. Or, General survey of the ancient and modern state of that islands: With reflection, settlements, inhabitants, climate, products, commerce, laws, and government*, (London: T. Lowndes, 1774), vol.1, p.312.

¹¹ Williams, *A History*, p. 11.

¹² See footnote 6.

a total of five land patents were made; no more royal land patents were made during Grand Cayman's slave century. Nonetheless, the introductory proprietor planter class totaled seven people: the first land patent was granted to Daniel and Mary Campbell and John Middleton in 1734; the remaining four land grants were made in 1741 – all four of them 'authorized by [Jamaican] Governor Trelawny on the same day (August 20, 1741)'¹³ – to Mary Bodden, Murray Crymble, William Foster, and Samuel Spofforth. With the exception of grantees Mary Bodden and William Foster, the other grantees had virtually disappeared from Cayman's history by 1750 – perhaps because they had made their quick profit from Grand Cayman's exhaustible timber supply.¹⁴ However, it should be noted that the grantees-cum-mahogany entrepreneurs were initially required to pay a yearly rent of 2 shillings, and were likely to have arrived with their slaves and white servants not long after the grants had been made; as with Jamaican law, one white man was needed for every ten slaves.¹⁵

There is no evidence for Grand Cayman's population by 1734, but in 1774 George Gauld, a visiting hydrologist, estimated that approximately 400 people lived in Grand Cayman: approximately 200 of these inhabitants were free and the remaining

¹³ Craton, *Founded*, p. 39.

¹⁴ Facsimiles of the original land grants are to be found in Hirst, *Notes*, part 2, chapter 1.

¹⁵ *Ibid.* See also Orlando Patterson, *The Sociology of Slavery* (London: Associated University Presses, 1969), p.56; Stanley Engerman *et al.*, 'The Demographic Structure of the Caribbean Slave Societies in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries', in *General History of the Caribbean: The Slave Societies of the Caribbean*, vol. 3 (London: UNESCO Publishing, 1997), pp. 62-64.

200 constituted slaves. By 1802, 993 inhabitants resided in the island, 58% of them slaves.¹⁶ The censuses taken in 1821 and 1826 did not distinguish between whites and free people of colour, but the free population inclusive of free people of colour represented 42.5% and 43.7%, respectively;¹⁷ and by April, 1834, free Caymanians represented roughly 46% of a total population of 1800;¹⁸ indeed, slaves comprised the numerical majority to emancipation.

Towards the confirmation that historical Grand Cayman was a slave society of seafaring origins, I juxtapose two historiographic statements; essentially economic in their descriptions, these statements launch a conceptual frame both for those ethnicities that “shared” Cayman soil and the extent of their interdependency.

The first statement implicates the white element of Cayman society, intimating that by 1800 ‘the first economic system in the islands was a basic one derived from the sea, but dispersed externally.’¹⁹ Estimated at about one shilling per head by the late eighteenth century,²⁰ the green turtle especially was a very valuable New World

¹⁶See, respectively, CINA (transcriber), *Transcript of George Gauld’s Description of Grand Cayman, 1773* (George Town: CINA, 1993); *Our Islands’ Past: Edward Corbet’s Report and Census of 1802 on the Cayman Islands*, vol.1 (George Town: CINA and Cayman Free Press, 1992), p.21.

¹⁷ See *An Account of the Population of Grand Caymanas*, October 26, 1826, PRO, CO 137/179, f.347; the census of January, 1821 is also included in this despatch; see, accordingly, the copy letter from James Coe Esq, dated May 28, 1826.

¹⁸ See *Grand Caymanas Slave Returns*, April 1, 1834, PRO, T71/243, ff.133-134.

¹⁹ Smith, *The Maritime Heritage*, p.67

²⁰ In the absence of precise historical documentation, we cannot be sure of the exact cost of turtle by this time. Nonetheless, Hirst has speculated that turtle of the late eighteenth century might have

commodity; when salted, turtle meat lasted longer than beef or pork and was an effective remedy against scurvy.²¹ Although we are not given any precise annual figure of the amount of turtle caught, after speaking with the inhabitants on Grand Cayman in 1787, Captain Hull of HMS *Camilla* made the estimate that between 1,200 and 1,400 turtles were being sold at seaports in Jamaica per annum.²² Furthermore, thirteen years earlier, in 1774, historian Edward Long was also able to say of the inhabitants on Grand Cayman: 'Their principal occupation is the turtle-fishery[,] in which article they carry on a traffic with Port Royal [Jamaica], and supply some of such of the homeward-bound merchant ships as touch here in their way to the Gulph [i.e. the Gulf of Florida or the Gulf of Mexico.]'²³

By 1802, Caymanian turtle-fishers caught the majority of their turtle in locally made sloops '[along] the Keys & Shoals on the South side of Cuba in groups of eight to nine per 20 to 50 sloop tonnage'; the sister islands' earlier vast turtle supply had been virtually depleted, and together with their dangerous outlying reefs, those

secured this cost given that by the early 1830s they 'were sold to Jamaica at three and four shillings each.' See Hirst, *Notes*, p.27.

²¹ Biologist Archie Carr has provided a compelling narrative on the importance of turtle in the historical New World: '...while there were other sources from which to replace exhausted ship's stores', he begins, 'none was as good, abundant, and sure as turtle; and no other edible creature could be carried away and kept so long alive...It was only the...turtle that could take the place of spoiled kegs of beef and send a ship on for a second year of wandering. All early activity in the New World tropics – exploration, colonization, buccaneering, and even the maneuvering of naval squadrons – was in some way or degree dependent on turtle. It was quick rescue when scurvy struck, and shipwrecked people lived on it for months or even years. Salted or dried, it everywhere fed the seaboard poor. It was at once a staple and a luxury...' See *The Windward Road: Adventures of a Naturalist on Remote Caribbean Shores* (London: Robert Hale Limited, 1980), pp.203-4.

²² Quoted in Craton, *Founded*, p.52.

²³ Edward Long, *The History of Jamaica*, vol.1, p.310.

islands were frequented for turtle only in the quiet summer months of the turtle season.²⁴ Indeed, Caymanian turtle-fishers were welcome in Cuban waters until the beginning of the Ten Years' War (also known as the Cuban War of Independence) in 1868. During this period, non-Spanish ships were often seized in Cuban waters and held in detention; this proved the case, for instance, with Caymanian-manned and built schooners *Star* and *Lark*, seized in 1871 and 1872, respectively, which were released only after a fine was paid.²⁵ In spite of such an exceptional setback, and in addition to the fact of a depleted turtle yield in Cayman waters by this time, Caymanian seamen had also continued plying their turtle-fishing livelihood off the coasts of Honduras and Nicaragua by the 1840s, becoming well known for their maritime proficiency in this region by the onset of globalisation in Grand Cayman in the early 1970s.²⁶

Continuing our focus on the first historiographic statement, the opportunistic act of wrecking was also an economic mainstay of Grand Cayman in the first century of permanent settlement; Long was quick to remark of Caymanian seamen that 'their crews were attentive to two points, turtling and plundering of wrecks.'²⁷ Indeed, opportunism may have been an ideal, necessary trait to possess in the maritime-driven New World, but that the trait was understood to be influenced by the

²⁴ CINA, *Our Islands' Past*, vol. 1, p. 8.

²⁵ For the incident involving the *Star*, see Grant to Kimberley, March 10, 1872, IB/5/18, vol. 33, no. 49; and for the *Lark*, see Grant to Kimberley, November 8, 1873, IB/4/18, vol. 34, no. 188.

²⁶ See Archie Carr, *Windward Road*, chapter 9.

²⁷ Long, *The History of Jamaica*, vol.1, p.313.

somewhat amoral, thieving stance of piracy, rendered settling seamen especially suspect. Throughout New World history, merchant ships often ran aground due to inclement weather, darkness, or navigational folly, and if the receiver of wrecks was so authorized by the captain of the wreck in question to salvage any undamaged cargo, wrecking was not considered illegal. The wrecker and the ship's captain, then, would have had to agree on the wrecker's salvage fee, usually 50% of the ship's proceeds, and the salvage would proceed on that principle.²⁸ However, that one colonial official understood 'wrecking as the first cousin to piracy' reveals the occupation's underbelly, as, in addition to possibly precipitating wrecks, the potential wrecker often exposed his "pirate's" side.²⁹ It is true that complications between wrecker and ship captain were likely to emerge, and Caymanian wreckers were known to abuse captains and crews, illegally making off with precious cargo and other valuables with the intention of either selling these items at a profit or keeping certain articles for themselves. In this sense, wrecking was considered as nothing more than a piratical-masquerading occupation, something which Spanish Captain Tirri had perhaps experienced firsthand given his vivid description of Caymanian seamen in 1797:

The islet [of Grand Cayman] is inhabited by a handful of lawless men who bear the name and accidentally carry on the trade of fisher-folk but who are in

²⁸ See Craton, *Founded*, pp. 215-7.

²⁹ See J.A. Roy Bodden, *The Cayman Islands in Transition: The Politics, History, and Sociology of a Changing Society* (Kingston, 2007), p. 5. For a fuller understanding of this colonial official's view of wrecking and early Caymanianness, see especially George Hirst, *Notes*, 32-34.

reality nothing more than sea-robbers. The island constitutes their lair and it is the place where they hide their ill-gotten gains.

As turtle fishers, they have explored the south coast of Cuba and those of the [I]sle of Pines, and have thus become familiar with the big and dangerous reefs around them. Thus they often witness, or very soon hear of the frequent shipwrecks of the mariners driven onto these reefs. Instead of giving them the assistance and help that humanity demands, they hasten thither only to rob them and to take away to their caves even mere fragments of broken vessels. They make no exception even for English boats sailing from Jamaica, many of which fall into their clutches.³⁰

It is impossible to estimate the number of vessels wrecked in Cayman waters. However, if settled wreckers in the historical Cayman Islands made their living this way, then the act of wrecking – by Tirri’s account especially, and the residual effects of his description on later instances of Caymanian wrecking – automatically tainted any legal Caymanian maritime activity. Indeed, the wrecking incidents of 1874 and 1888 – discussed in greater detail in phase five of Caymanian history³¹ – have borne out this understanding primarily through the “strong-arm” tactics of Caymanian wreckers who boarded ostensibly wrecked ships, in the process amassing an external reputation as men and women influenced by the dishonest, piratical custom of wrecking. Furthermore, the vested interest of Caymanian Magistrates in wrecking

³⁰ Quoted in Ulf Hannerz, *Caymanian Politics: Structure and Style in a Changing Society* (Stockholm: Stockholm Studies in Social Anthropology, 1974), p.25.

³¹ See pp. 122-125 and corresponding footnotes.

in these instances served only to further legitimize the actions of their constituents.³² Any such legitimating influence (to be later discussed) can be understood in national and cultural terms when it is considered that wrecking had, from outside interpretation, become associated with a Caymanian way of life. Britain especially understood the importance of wrecking for the Caymanian people, and the willingness of its colonial officials to overlook the “dishonest” 1888 incident especially, despite the passing of an earlier act designed to prevent any such incident among Jamaican, Turks and Caicos, and Caymanian wreckers, is very telling: any such colonial oversight in effect sanctioned a way of life that was the product of an impoverished economy.

Despite any negative reputation associated with wrecking, in February, 1794 settlers on Grand Cayman witnessed a convoy of British merchant ships running aground on the reefs of Grand Cayman’s East End coast. ‘[T]he people of East End...[were] reported to have shown great heroism in ensuring that no lives were lost’, also salvaging as much property as they could.³³ This historic incident has lived on in the Caymanian imagination to the present day, and has assumed nothing less than an epic tale of the seafaring greatness of the Caymanian ancestor, if contrasted with

³² *Ibid.*

³³ See Margaret Leshikar-Denton, *The 1794 Wreck of the Ten Sail, Cayman Islands, British West Indies: A Historical Study and Archaeological Survey*, unpublished MA dissertation (Texas A&M University, 1993), p.15; see also CINA, *Our Islands’ Past: The Wreck of the Ten Sails*, vol.2 (George Town: CINA and Cayman Free Press, 1994).

the more seemingly commonplace and negatively perceived wrecking activities of inchoate Caymanians.

It was George Hirst who first attempted to provide an argument for the piratical influence of wrecking relative to the historical Cayman Islands. According to him, the isolated island of Grand Cayman especially would have been an ideal place ‘...for [buccaneers] to settle down to a quieter and more peaceful life finding the business of pirating was getting more serious and risky every year and confining themselves to...operations from the shore.’³⁴ Indeed, by 1720, pirates in the Caribbean had begun to come under extensive naval threat from Britain especially, many of them making their way to the North American region to continue life as freebooters.³⁵ Although one could attempt to link settling pirates in Grand Cayman with the intention to cover their past actions on an isolated island, the historical evidence with which to confirm a direct piratical effect upon wreckers in the Cayman Islands is lacking. Despite any such lack, there is documented evidence that between 1670 and 1730 English buccaneers, from Blackbeard in 1717 to Neil Walker in 1730, often visited the shores of the Cayman Islands either for turtle, to careen their ships and sign treaties amongst themselves, or else to return for stolen

³⁴ Hirst, *Notes*, p.33.

³⁵ See, for instance, Peter Leeson, *The Invisible Hook: The Hidden Economics of Pirates* (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2009), chapters 6 and 8; see also Arne Bialuschewski, ‘Black People Under the Black Flag: Piracy and the Slave Trade on the West Coast of Africa, 1718-1723,’ in *Slavery & Abolition*, vol. 29, issue 4 (2008), pp.461-475.

hidden treasure.³⁶ Nonetheless, Hirst's argument that wrecking was symptomatic of an earlier piratical way cannot be rigorously substantiated in the case of historical Cayman; however, besides figuring the importance of the sea in modern and traditional Caymanian cultural sentiment, this study's fourth section assesses various modern-day Caymanian cultural interpretations with regard to piracy and the islands' national Pirates Week festival.

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Having briefly assessed the first historiographic statement, thereby confirming an important seafaring constituent of a developing Caymanian historical identity from the outset, the second historiographic statement offers a more expansive understanding of any such development in its stress that '[f]or about a century, from the 1730s to the early 1830s, slaves were essential to the Caymanian economy, especially for logging and cotton plantations.'³⁷ In the first instance, the importance of slavery on Grand Cayman was visible from the first decade of permanent settlement on Grand Cayman when slaves worked as timber extractors. From as early as 1734, inhabitant John Bodden oversaw a number of John Middleton's timber slaves, in addition to William Foster's eight timber slaves, which had by 1736

³⁶ For a detailed account of buccaneers/pirates in the Cayman Islands by this time, see Charles Johnson (Captain), *A General History of the Robberies and Murders of the Most Notorious Pirates* (New York: The Lyons Press, 1998, first published in 1724), chapters 3, 12, 14 and 15; In 1730, Pirate Neil Walker plundered the *Genouesa* wrecked on the reefs of the sister islands, but was never caught by the British authorities; for the account, see 'State Calendar of Papers', June 19, 1733, PRO, CO 137/54.

³⁷ Craton, *Founded*, p.63.

become twenty slaves;³⁸ although this account is almost certainly incomplete, perhaps these were the only slaves on Grand Cayman before more slaves would have been brought in by the remaining four land grantees in 1741 or later. Nonetheless, and suggesting that mahogany and fustic had become the major feature of the island's economy by the 1740s, we can be certain that although abandoning his granted land within a short time of taking it up, grantee Samuel Spofforth's 25-ton *Experiment* returned to Jamaica from Grand Cayman in early 1745 with 81 "pieces" of mahogany. Also, in 1764 merchant ships the *Success* and *Eagle* together carried 80 tons of timber from Grand Cayman to Jamaica, while its protection vessel carried 'another thirty tons of mahogany.'³⁹ Although the shipping records between 1745 and 1765 are likely to be incomplete, fustic and mahogany remained Grand Cayman's primary export resources as confirmed by Robert Christian of the ship *Active* when he visited Grand Cayman sometime in the latter year: 'Most of their Employment is cutting Mahogany, Fustick & c. which they send to Jamaica.'⁴⁰

Unlike the intense slave labour and large numbers of slaves required for the more "efficient" operation of sugar plantations, the earlier timber industry on Grand

³⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 42-44.

³⁹ This information was taken from Craton, *Founded*, pp. 50, 51. See also, Jamaican Shipping Returns, 1680-1818, PRO, CO 142/18, ff. 91-92, 95-96, 96-97

⁴⁰ Quoted in Craton, *Founded*, p.51.

Cayman required fewer slaves that would have worked in smaller labour gangs.⁴¹ Like British Honduras – now known as Belize – there might have been a relatively vast market of untapped mahogany and fustic in Grand Cayman from the early years of settlement – Captain Christian describing Grand Cayman as possessing ‘Wood in great plenty’ – but unlike British Honduras, by 1773 timber extraction is no longer mentioned as a mainstay of Grand Cayman’s economy due most likely to the tiny island’s obvious exhaustible timber supply.⁴² History is also silent on how Cayman slaves were treated as timber extractors, but we may here look to Gad Heuman’s assessment of the treatment of timber slaves in British Honduras: ‘Although work was often difficult and dangerous’, Heuman begins, ‘life for the timber-cutting slave was less regimented and generally subject to less arbitrary punishment than that of their counterparts on sugar plantations.’⁴³ Heuman’s researched description of a slavery system based on timber extraction begins to denote a Panglossian-type slave society as Michael Craton utilizes the term: ‘Where slave conditions – though nowhere quite “Panglossian” [or ideal for the slave] – were relatively benign, this could largely be attributed to the fact that slavery, once it had been instituted for the most intensely cultivated and profitable areas, spilled over into those colonies that probably could not have justified the Atlantic slave

⁴¹ Gad Heuman, *The Caribbean: Brief Histories* (London: Hodder Headline Group, 2006), p.28.

⁴² The accounts of George Gauld and Census taker Edward Corbet made in 1773 and 1802 do not include timber exports in Grand Cayman’s trade. See, respectively, CINA, Transcript of George Gauld’s Description of Grand Cayman, 1773; *Our Island’s Past*, vol.1. Edward Long does mention that the inhabitants on Grand Cayman exported small amounts of timber, but given that his lengthy work was published in 1774, he may perhaps have been speaking of an earlier time.

⁴³ Heuman, *The Caribbean*, p.28

trade on their behalf alone.’⁴⁴ Indeed, no colony which depended on the minor staples of mahogany and then cotton would have proved the primary beneficiary of slavery in the first place, given that between 1770 and 1850 such crops only accounted for a mere fifth of exports from the British West Indies.⁴⁵

Where the period following the introduction of cotton cultivation around the 1770s is concerned, Craton suggests that ‘[c]otton production was less arduous than the year-round gang labour required for producing sugar, the latter never becoming the chief cash crop in the colonial Cayman Islands.’⁴⁶ It should, however, not be overlooked that Grand Cayman’s slaves – who represented two-thirds of the entire slave population on that island throughout the early nineteenth century towards emancipation⁴⁷– would have indeed been subjected to hard labour under the watchful eye of an overseer. While there is no evidence about the seasonal routine of cotton cultivation in Grand Cayman, it would probably not have been much different from that in the Bahamas or Anguilla, for instance. Before cultivation could occur, then, land would have had to be cleared of any trees and vegetation, a process which was in itself strenuous but not cyclical. Thereafter, and usually

⁴⁴ Dr. Pangloss was a major character in Voltaire’s eighteenth century work *Candide*, and Craton has adjectived his name in the above instance, given his proclivity to see life in degrees of optimism. See Voltaire, *Candide* (Createspace Publishing, Amazon.com, 2010 reprint); see also, Michael Craton, ‘Hobbesian or Panglossian? The two extremes of Slave Conditions in the British West Indies’, in *Empire, Enslavement and Freedom in the Caribbean*, written by Michael Craton (Kingston: Ian Randle Publishers, 1997), p.231.

⁴⁵ See David Eltis, ‘The Slave Economies of the Caribbean: Structure, Performance, Evolution and Significance’, in *General History of the Caribbean*, pp.105-137.

⁴⁶ Craton, *Founded*, p.68

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p.68.

between the months of January and June, cotton seeds were planted in extensively hoed ground. The seeds normally took two months to flower and bloom, by which time the slave would be required to harvest and finally clean the cotton balls for export. Due to a substantial lack of information on Grand Cayman's cotton enterprise, we cannot be certain if the cotton gin, the machine which separated the cotton from the seed, was used there as it would have been on the Bahamas towards emancipation in 1834.⁴⁸ If this piece of machinery was indeed used on Grand Cayman, it would have quickened the cleaning process of the cotton, thereby lessening the tedious intensity of the slave's labour.

As the industrial revolution developed in the final two decades of the eighteenth century, Caribbean cotton (especially in the Bahamas) surged in value after 1770 as new technologies in Britain by then made it easier – and more profitable – to process more of the staple at less of a production cost.⁴⁹ It was against this background that cotton cultivation took hold of Grand Cayman's economy from at least the early 1770s, if we accept Gauld's assertion in 1773 that [t]he island produces a great quantity of cotton, which is their principal article of export...⁵⁰ With its limestone landscape, tropical climate and moderate seasonal rainfall,

⁴⁸ See Michael Craton *et al.*, *Islanders' in the Stream: A History of the Bahamian People*, vol. 1 (Atlanta: University of Georgia Press, 2000); See also Craton, *A History of the Bahamas* (London: Collins, 1962).

⁴⁹ For a more in-depth understanding of the technological advancements of Britain's Industrial Revolution, see, for instance J. T Ashton, *The Industrial Revolution, 1760 -1830* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998); Robert C. Allen, *The British Industrial Revolution in a Global Perspective*(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

⁵⁰ CINA, Transcript of George Gauld's Remarks.

Grand Cayman was particularly suited to cotton cultivation, even if this cash crop was both vulnerable to insects and depleted soil fertility.⁵¹ Nonetheless, word of the tiny colony's plantocratic potential spread throughout the Miskito Coast – situated along the Nicaraguan and Honduran coastline – a British Protectorate since 1655.⁵² In 1787 British settlers residing along the Miskito Coast had to evacuate this region 'under the terms of the Convention of London signed a year before as an extension to the Treaty of Versailles'⁵³, terms which placed much of the control of the coast under Spanish-Nicaraguan control. Thus some of these settlers-turned planters began migrating to Grand Cayman so that by 1787 the island's population stood at well over 700 inhabitants. According to British Captain John Hull's admiralty report, of the incoming 300 inhabitants from the Miskito Coast to 1787, 50 were white and 250 were slaves;⁵⁴ an increase of this nature indicated the expansion of Grand Cayman's cotton cultivation enterprise, given that the incoming settlers, according to Hull, were in Grand Cayman 'making large [p]lantations for [c]otton.'⁵⁵ However, Hull's use of the adjective *large* is questionable, in view of the lack of other evidence and the small size of the island (Grand Cayman is twenty-two miles long by five miles wide at its widest point).

⁵¹ Craton, *Founded*, p.66.

⁵² See F.G. Davenport *et al.*, *European Treaties Bearing on the History of the United States and its Dependencies*, vol.4 (Washington: Thonssen Press, 2008), p.62

⁵³ See Roy Murray, 'Notes on the History of Grand Caymanas', unpublished manuscript (George Town: CINA, 2003), p.8.

⁵⁴ See Craton, *Founded*, pp.52, 65 and 66.

⁵⁵ Quoted in Craton, *Founded*, p.52.

Based on available shipping records, Grand Cayman's cotton boom reached its peak between January 1802 and July 1804. In this 30-month period, according to Craton, some 200,000 pounds, or nearly 100 tons, of cotton was shipped to Jamaican ports, dispersed between eighteen vessels making a total of thirty voyages.⁵⁶ More than half of the merchant ships into Grand Cayman throughout this period were 'owned, captained and crewed by Jamaicans.'⁵⁷ These figures indicate the Jamaican investment in Cayman cotton at this time. Notwithstanding this, if we are to abide by the inhabitants' estimate – as relayed to census taker Edward Corbet in 1802 – that before 1802 an estimated 30 tons of cotton per annum was being exported, then the near 100 tons exported in this thirty-month period would have indicated increased export by at least 10 tons per annum.⁵⁸ Nonetheless, after 1808 and towards 1818, we notice a substantial decrease of trade between Jamaica and Grand Cayman. Where many Jamaican-built schooners were arriving in Grand Cayman's port in 1804 – most of them involved in cotton export – by 1818 only Caymanian seamen were 'regularly involved in the trade between Grand Cayman and Kingston or Montego Bay, and their trade [had become] less frequent.'⁵⁹ Indeed, Caymanian cargo had become typically more mixed and smaller after 1808, as represented in, for instance, William Bodden's exported goods in 1811, which consisted of: 19 bags

⁵⁶ This information was taken from Craton, *Founded*, pp.66-67; see also A List of Ships and Vessels that have entered at the Port of Kingston, 1802-1818, PRO, CO 142/21, ff. 122-123; 142/22, f. 101.

⁵⁷ Craton, *Founded*, p.66.

⁵⁸ This estimation is based on what was intimated to Corbet in the 1802 census; see CINA, *Our Islands' Past*, vol.1, p.5

⁵⁹ Craton, *Founded*, p.70.

of cotton, 6 baskets of corn, 1 mahogany log, 2 barrels of tortoiseshells, a 600 weight of corned fish and wrecked goods to the amount of 18 puncheons of rum and a 1200 weight of old copper. These goods were exchanged for 2 barrels of sugar, 5 tubs of crockeryware, 1 barrel of butter, flour, a small box of tobacco, bottles of alcohol, 3 barrels of beef and pork, and 6 barrels of bread.⁶⁰ The absence of slave imports to Grand Cayman after 1804 and a noticeably smaller scale, more varied trade between Grand Cayman and Jamaica by 1808, suggests that Grand Cayman's cotton boom had peaked by 1804, thereafter declining to and after 1808.⁶¹

It is for the reason of crop profitability, then, that Craton's second Hobbesian typology of slave societies is usually associated with those colonies where the more profitable sugar cane was cultivated (by 1773 sugar had gained preeminence across the British West Indies, rendering the earlier smaller cash crops of cotton, tobacco and indigo largely insignificant).⁶² Upon completion of his introductory comparative work between slaves on Jamaica's Worthy Park estate and the Stevensone cotton estate on the island of Great Exuma in the Bahamas, Craton summarized that: 'where slave lives were "Hobbesian" in the sense of "nasty, brutish and short," this could largely be attributed to the evils of a system that sanctioned slavery wherever

⁶⁰ Information quoted from Craton, *Founded*, p.70.

⁶¹ This thought is based on the available shipping records between Grand Cayman and Kingston between 1802-1810 (see footnote 56).

⁶² Bernard Marshall, *Slavery, Law and Society in the British Windward Islands, 1763-1823* (Kingston: Arawak Publications, 2007), p.94.

the most profitable type of agriculture was extremely labor-intensive and situated in unhealthy areas.’⁶³

Craton’s comparative analysis places slaves on the Stevensone estate ‘at the benign end of a scale of demographic health, on which sugar plantation slaves such as those at Worthy Park, Jamaica, occupied a far lower position’ (Craton 1997, p. 204). This Craton argues around a number of facts: for instance, slaves on Stevensone experienced a positive rate of natural increase between 1822-1834, ‘from 254 [slaves] to 376’, while Worthy Park slaves between 1783 and 1834 ‘rarely came close to sustaining its population by natural increase’ (p.206); where slaves on Stevensone were experiencing a crude annual birth rate averaging 42.5 per thousand slaves, Worthy Park’s crude annual birth rapidly rate fell from 21.7 per thousand slaves in the slave registration period (from 1816 onwards) to 15.6 per thousand slaves towards 1830. Similarly, the crude death rate among Stevensone’s slaves averaged 8 per thousand between 1822 and 1834, at ‘one-sixth the rate at Worthy Park’ (p.207). Craton then attempts to assess these discrepancies by looking at a number of potential causal factors. For instance, relying on Philip Curtin’s argument that African slaves were more prone to a ‘notoriously low birth rate’ than creole slaves,⁶⁴

⁶³ In his utilization of the Hobbesian label, Craton is implicating 17th English philosopher Thomas Hobbes’ work *Leviathan*, which, as a political and social treatise, largely views the state of nature as chaotic, bellicose and short. See Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008 reprint); see also, Craton, ‘Hobbesian or Panglossian’, p.202.

⁶⁴ See Philip Curtin, *The Atlantic Slave Trade: A Census* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1969), chapters 7, 8, and 10.

Craton links Worthy Park's escalating slave death rate and its dependence on an imported slave population between the ages of 12 and 25 with statistically diminishing fertility and health rates (pp. 206-207). On the other hand, and based on the above estimated age range of incoming African slaves, that African slaves were no longer imported to Stevensone after 1784, signaled a healthy natural increase among the more settled and climatically adapted creole slave against a decreasing, ageing African population (pp. 207-233).

In a similar way, and unlike many of their Jamaican counterparts between 1821 and emancipation, slaves on Grand Cayman were experiencing some semblance of natural increase similar to the colonies of Barbuda and the Bahamas throughout roughly the same period. There is no evidence of slaves being shipped to Grand Cayman after 1804, so it is very likely that any increasing slave numbers, as with Stevensone slaves, largely represented an internal effort.⁶⁵ However, Barbuda stands out here in terms of rapidly increasing slave numbers by natural means. A largely subsistence colony, Barbudan slaves either produced crops for the sustenance of the colony, or else were used to replenish dwindling supplies in nearby Antigua, and between 1821-28 had experienced, on annual average, a natural increase of roughly 28.4 per thousand slaves, representing the largest naturally increasing slave population in the British West Indies throughout this

⁶⁵ This conclusion is based on my own assessment of the available shipping registers between 1802 and 1818; also see footnote 56.

time.⁶⁶ The cotton-producing Bahamas, in its totality, also witnessed a high rate of positive increase from the late 1820s towards emancipation with an annual average of roughly 14.4 slaves per thousand.⁶⁷ Similarly, between January, 1821 and April, 1826, Cayman slaves had experienced positive rates of natural increase; out of an entire slave population of 889 slaves by April, 1826 a total of 133 slaves had been born and 56 had died. Per capita, this indicated that Grand Cayman's rate of natural increase by 1826 stood at roughly 17 slaves per thousand.⁶⁸

Notably, any correlation between slave treatment and their demographic and situational circumstance in the colony in question represents only a plausible analytical scheme and not precisely measurable factors of causation.⁶⁹ For instance, Orlando Patterson's comprehensive work *The Sociology of Slavery* argues that the high mortality slave rate mainly among incoming African slaves to Jamaica towards emancipation was related to combined factors which included disease, a humid climate, and malnutrition. Such factors, according to Patterson, would have been exacerbated by intense field labour towards the planters' desire for maximum yield

⁶⁶ Barry Higman, *Slave Populations of the British Caribbean, 1807-1834* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1984), p.310.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁸ Calculations based on PRO, CO 137/170, f.403; Craton has also calculated this rate based on the same documentation; see *Founded*, p.71.

⁶⁹ For further elaboration here, see, for instance, Barry Higman, 'The Slave Populations of the British Caribbean: Some Nineteenth Century Variations' (first published in 1976), in *Caribbean Slave Society and Economy*, pp.221-227.

and profit of the valuable sugar cash crop.⁷⁰ Similarly, Philip Curtin's *The Atlantic Slave Trade* contends that slave existence on sugar plantations begins to illuminate the connection between plantation type, slave treatment, slave fertility, and mortality, and the ways in which African-born slaves and creole slaves, in numerical terms, were bound to influence these factors. African-born slaves dominated in English sugar colonies to at least 1810 because of the rapid rate of decrease in these colonies – with the probable exception of Barbados⁷¹ – among the existing slave population.⁷² This is why, for instance, in his study Craton cautions that '[i]t seems plausible...although not directly provable, that a balanced sex ratio and a "pyramidal" age profile, as exhibited by the [Stevensone] slaves, would be generally conducive to viable fertility as well as mortality levels';⁷³ or, '[a]lthough it is impossible...to order the variables in [assessing the treatability of slaves], the discovery of data on a slave population for which virtually *all* causal factors were favourable permits comparisons with the data from less favourable slave regimes on which demographic research has so far concentrated.'⁷⁴

Craton's effort represents a thoughtful assessment of slave treatment through a statistical analytical gaze. Nonetheless, with reference to Caymanian history,

⁷⁰ Patterson, *The Sociology of Slavery*, p.100

⁷¹ See especially Higman, *Slave Populations*, p.75; see also Hilary Beckles, *A History of Barbados: From Amerindian Settlement to Caribbean Single Market* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007, 2nd edition), chapter 5.

⁷² Philip Curtin, *The Atlantic Slave Trade: A Census* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1972).

⁷³ Craton, 'Hobbesian or Panglossian?', p.212

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p.204.

Craton's analysis begins to establish that although slaves were not treated equally throughout the British West Indies, the relatively less harsh treatment of slaves in certain colonies would not have diminished the importance of slavery itself. Indeed, Bodden makes a sentimental mistake here when he infers that the differences between a "Hobbesian" Jamaica and a "Panglossian" Grand Cayman must conclude in the latter's non-slavocratic actuality.⁷⁵ Therefore, the understanding that colonies like the Bahamas and Bermuda were still slave societies even if their demand for slaves could not, on its own, justify the Atlantic Slave Trade becomes laden with meaning when transposed to Grand Cayman's colonial context.⁷⁶

Grand Cayman was also a viable slave society on the basis of the slave-to-master ratio. Slaves there consistently outnumbered their masters to emancipation. By 1802, there were 545 slaves out of a total population of 933 inhabitants; they represented the slight numerical majority, standing at just over 58% of the entire population.⁷⁷ Just before emancipation, slave numbers had increased to 985, slaves by then representing just below 55% of a total population of around 1800.⁷⁸ Like

⁷⁵ Bodden, *The Cayman Islands in Transition*, chapter 1.

⁷⁶ This understanding is especially borne out in Craton, *Founded*, chapter 4; Elsa Goveia also gives a simple yet illuminating definition of a slave society independently of that society's economic importance: a slave society thus represents a '... community based on slavery, [inclusive of] masters and freedmen as well as slaves'; see *Slave Society in the British Leeward Islands at the End of the Eighteenth Century* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1965), p.viii. For an especially illuminating explication of Goveia's afore-mentioned definition in the substantially non-sugar Dutch West Indian colonies, see Edward Donoghue, *Negro Slavery: Slave Society and Slave Life in the Danish West Indies* (Bloomington, Indiana: Author House Press, 2007), section 5.

⁷⁷ CINA, *Our Islands' Past*, vol.1, p.21.

⁷⁸ See Slave Returns, 1834, ff.133, 134.

Bermuda whose slave-to-white numbers by 1833 stood at 4297 whites to 4277 slaves, Grand Cayman's slave-to-master ratio stands out among the British West Indian colonies. In Jamaica, for instance, between 1800 and 1830, slaves constituted 82 to 86% of that colony's population; similarly, Barbadian slaves made up 80% of the entire population within the same timeline. The Eastern Caribbean colonies followed a similar demographic trend, from Antigua whose slaves comprised just below 83% of the population by 1834, to Dominica whose slaves represented 80% of that colony's population within two years of emancipation.⁷⁹

Yet, although the concession must be made that Grand Cayman's slave-to-master ratio was comparably more even than much of the British West Indies, we should ultimately strive to understand Grand Cayman's slavocratic worth not so much in numerical terms – although this understanding is an important indicator of the extent of the dependence on slavery in Grand Cayman – but in institutional and ideological ones. David Francione begins to capture the importance of institutionalized slavery where this term denotes not only the entrenched socio-occupational practice of any kind of slavery, but the resultant hierarchical scheme that determined master-slave relations: '...the system of institutionalized slavery

⁷⁹ See Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death: A Comparative Study* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 1982), pp.477-480; see also W.S. Zuill, *The Story of Bermuda and her People* (London: Macmillan Caribbean, 1983, 3rd edition), chapter 10.

permits pain, suffering and death whenever it is in the interests of [the] property owners.’⁸⁰

Thus by 1700 (as many white indentured servants migrated elsewhere in the New World, and Sub-Saharan Africans became the major source of involuntary labour throughout the British West Indies and indeed the wider Caribbean⁸¹), the interest of the slaveholder throughout the Caribbean had long been a decidedly economic one.⁸² In light of the socio-economic situation of institutionalized slavery in the Caribbean, the slaves’ pain, suffering, and death can be understood as subordinate to this economic interest. This represented the ideological underpinning of slave labour, and the default subordinate relationship that existed between slave and master. Indeed, although Panglossian slaves were not typically prone to the harsh treatment of their Hobbesian counterparts, the same theme of subordination applied to them, for their very status as slaves was indispensably linked not only to their perceived inferiority, combustibility, and workability, but also to their ownership by men and women with economic motives. Two points are worth

⁸⁰Although David Francione concerns himself with the ways in which animal welfare is being sacrificed for their human masters’ benefit, his ideas can indeed be made relatable to the master-slave relationship/experience in the New World given the accepted view that slaves there were, like cattle, considered to be chattel – personal property – and were therefore subjected to harsh treatment towards their masters’ economic benefit. See *Rain without Thunder: The Ideology of the Animal Rights Movement* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1996), p.222.

⁸¹ For more on the migratory patterns of white indentures from the mid to late seventeenth century onward, see, for instance, Hilary Beckles, *A History of Barbados: From Amerindian Settlement to Nation State* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1990); Neville Connell, *A Short History of Barbados* (Bridgetown: The Barbados Museum and Historical Society, 1959).

⁸² For an introductory yet thorough understanding of the economic importance of slavery in the Caribbean, see David Eltis, ‘The Slave Economies of the Caribbean’, pp.105-137.

raising at this juncture: first, although better treated slaves were typically prone to naturally increasing numbers, this did not diminish their inferiority in a society/economy that used them institutionally; and, second, a Panglossian-style slave society did not furnish an automatic understanding that its slaves were without an anti-slavery ideology.

Briefly implicating the second of these slavocratic factors towards confirming that the above ideology existed in Grand Cayman to 1834, there is evidence of resistance among Caymanian slaves. For instance, in 1816 and 1821 slaves Primus and Hanibal, respectively, were convicted of the practice of obeah by a jury of twelve free Caymanian men. Obeah was (and indeed is) an Afro-Caribbean religion, which by 1800 was not tolerated throughout the British West Indies for its ability to bring slaves together in revolt.⁸³ Thus having, it was alleged, buried an egg in the kitchen room of freeman James Coe Senior, Primus's sentence was permanent exile from Grand Cayman; the specifics of Hanibal's actions were not made known, but he too was convicted of obeah and was also permanently exiled from Grand Cayman. In another instance of potential slave subversion, in 1816 a female slave by the name of Long Celia was so convinced that freedom was being withheld from Cayman slaves that she urged a number of male slaves to arm themselves with machetes and free

⁸³For more information on the consideration of obeah as subversive and demonic throughout the British West Indies, see Dale Bisnauth, *History of Religions in the Caribbean* (Trenton, New Jersey, African World Press, Inc., 1996), p. 83-84; Richard Hart, *Slaves Who Abolished Slavery: Blacks in Rebellion* (Kingston: University of West Indies Press, 2002), chapter 6; Eugene Genovese, *Roll Jordan, Roll: The World the Slaves Made* (New York: Vintage Books, 1976), section 4.

themselves from illegal slavery. Long Celia was ultimately betrayed by a domestic slave who brought the plan to the attention of Caymanian planters, and her punishment was a public flogging.⁸⁴

Based on these recorded instances of slave rebellion, we begin to realize that some Caymanian slaves were more resistant to their freed coloured and white owners, while others were more inclined to ingratiate themselves to them (I analyze the free people of colour in Cayman slave society later in this subsection). Indeed, *all* types of slave societies manifested the automatic degree to which some slaves accepted their plight, thereby accommodating to their masters, while others resisted them.⁸⁵ Furthermore, the presence of a slave court on Grand Cayman confirmed that island's legal contiguity with other colonies in the British West Indies throughout the eighteenth century towards emancipation. The very fact that slaves were to be found in Grand Cayman together with a slave court signaled that '...slave laws were essential for the continued existence of slavery as an institution...' there. This spoke to an accepted legal structure fashioned from English law and its dedication

⁸⁴ These accounts can be found in Hirst, *Notes*, pp.200-210.

⁸⁵ For a more detailed understanding of the ways in which slaves betrayed themes of resistance and accommodation within the slave society, see Franklin Knight, *The Genesis of a Fragmented Nationalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990); Thomas Durant, Jr. and David Knottnerus, *Plantation Society and Race Relations* (Westport, Connecticut, Praeger, 1999); Knight, 'Slavery in a Plantation Society', in *Caribbean Slavery in the Atlantic World: A Student Reader*, edited by Verene Shepherd and Hilary Beckles (Kingston: Ian Randle Publishers, 1999), pp.398-412.

to ‘...the respect for [the] liberty of the subject.’⁸⁶ Therefore, this legal dedication worked not only to secure the slaves’ status as ‘property’ of British subjects, but also stressed that the former be subjected to a rule of law whose practitioners reserved the right to enforce and maintain law and order, an enforcement which indeed ‘lay at the very heart of the slave system.’⁸⁷ The sweeping intent of this legal dedication, then, signaled a default suspicion of the predominating slaves as potentially subversive properties; in comparative terms, as with a decidedly white perception of slaves during, for instance, the Haitian Revolution which occurred from 1791 to 1804, or the Tacky Rebellion in Jamaica in 1760, there was a similar perception that the spirit of resistance present in certain Caymanian slaves had to be broken if law and order, in addition to economic yield, was to be maintained in Grand Cayman, despite that island’s relatively impoverished and isolated state throughout its slave century.⁸⁸ Thus we return to the idea of institutional slavery, which in its most essential form is not so much predicated on a slave-to-master ratio, but on the necessity that the “lawless and rebellious” slave be kept broken and under the master’s control.

⁸⁶ Elsa Goveia, ‘The West Indian Laws of the Eighteenth Century’ (originally published in 1960), in *Caribbean Slave Society and Economy*, edited by Hilary Beckles *et al.* (New York: New Press, 1991), p.350.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸⁸ For thorough introductions to the Haitian Revolution and the Tacky Rebellion, see Heuman, *The Caribbean*, chapters 6 and 7, respectively.

Additionally, like the other slave societies in the British West Indies, Grand Cayman's social structure from 1734 to 1834 functioned on behalf of whites, free people of colour, and slaves. These structural-functional manifestations also confirm institutionalized slavery, although Bodden classifies historical Cayman, in socio-cultural terms, as fundamentally different in terms of its social interrelationship scheme. 'What made the relationships different in Cayman vis-à-vis the wider Caribbean', he begins, 'was that the physical and environmental characteristics of the Cayman Islands dictated that symbiosis, rather than adversarial relationships, was the norm.'⁸⁹ Bodden seems to be relating this idea of symbiosis among Grand Cayman's settlement to the white strata, arguing, like Hannerz⁹⁰ and Amit⁹¹ that because of the absence of an influential planter/absentee class and hyper-profitable natural resources, whites in Cayman automatically worked together in their desire to adapt and survive in relatively bare environmental conditions. However, this understanding of total social and cultural symbiosis can be misleading: by focusing on whites only, there rests the implication that slaves and free people of colour were not legitimate social entities and that whites in historical Cayman society were able to reduce or eliminate the racial tensions typical of elsewhere in the Caribbean. Yet in light of the preceding analyses which demonstrated that slaves were subjected to a superseding "superior"

⁸⁹ Bodden, *The Cayman Islands*, p.4

⁹⁰ See Ulf Hannerz, *Caymanian Politics: Structure and Style in a Changing Island Society* (Stockholm: Department of Social Anthropology, University of Stockholm, 1974), pp.21-32.

⁹¹ Amit, 'A Clash of Vulnerabilities' pp. 574-94.

exploitative will of the master in Grand Cayman, the realization should be made that until 1834 there was a noticeable relational social scheme that betrayed the racial divisions which constitute the social hierarchy of slave societies. Accordingly, I further question Bodden's idea of complete socio-cultural symbiosis on Grand Cayman within the concept of the slave society and its structural-functional manifestations in my assessment of the social role of free people of colour in that island's racial hierarchy.

The origins of Grand Cayman's free people of colour are shrouded in uncertainty. In 1773, Gauld offered a summary of the island's population as 200 whites and 'above [the] same number of Negroes and Mulattos';⁹² unfortunately, of the latter groups, Gauld did not distinguish the free from the enslaved of an already vague number. In keeping with the histories of other free people of colour throughout the British West Indies, however, it is likely that in the earlier years of settlement in Grand Cayman many of the free people of colour were the 'miscegenated offspring of...whites who had arranged for their freedom, [subsequently conform[ing] to the Euro-creole pattern of the dominant group.'⁹³ I am inclined to view free Negroes as part of the free coloured designation although they were more likely to have gained

⁹² CINA (compiler), Transcript of George Gauld's Remarks.

⁹³ Arnold Sio, 'Marginality and Free Coloured Identity in Caribbean Slave Society' (first published in 1987), in *Caribbean Slave Society and Economy*, p.152.

their freedom through manumission.⁹⁴ Nonetheless, we can be certain that by 1802, the free coloured designation did indeed exist on Grand Cayman, with free people of colour positioned between the slave on the lowest social rungs and whites who controlled the society in legal and economic terms. The nature of such a positioning is of a colonial making, and in many ways the deductions to be made about any established free coloured population, serve also to express that population's complicit role in colonialism and its supporting logic.⁹⁵

The major indicator of such a social position, as its members strive to perpetuate a dominating ethnocentric logic, is initially revealed in the dedication of Grand Cayman's free people of colour to slavery: their conformity to a dominant Euro-creole pattern is initially revealed in the fact that 63% of Grand Cayman's free people of colour owned slaves by 1802. Dispersed into 22 families unevenly distributed throughout Grand Cayman, they owned 9% of the island's entire slave-holdings, or 49 slaves out of a total of 545.⁹⁶ Although we cannot be certain how many among Grand Cayman's free people of colour were planters by 1802, or the occupations of their slaves, by virtue of the fact of the formers' status as

⁹⁴ Heuman writes that 'the freedmen caste was internally highly differentiated', something which confirmed that free Negroes by virtue of their colour and single biological heritage were bound to be understood as inferior to free coloured men and women who had white blood and were in a more advantageous social position in relation to whites and whiteness. See Heuman, 'The Social Structure of the Slave Societies in the Caribbean', in *General History of the Caribbean*, p.145.

⁹⁵ See Partha Chatterjee, *The Nation and Its Fragments* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), chapters 1 through 4.

⁹⁶ CINA, *Our Islands' Past*, vol.1, pp. 18-21.

slaveholders, they were, in the crudest analysis, demonstrating a consciousness that depended on putative Euro-colonial understandings of the slave: in the colonial New World setting, slaves were indeed slaves because of the completeness of their subjugation, which was superlatively defined in terms of their forced labour. The foregoing numerical picture, together with the logic I have provided it, begins to corroborate Jerome Handler's claim that '[coloured] freedmen and whites owned slaves for similar reasons.'⁹⁷

By 1833, Grand Cayman's free people of colour continued to exhibit an ethnocentric consciousness hinged on their social position, although, unlike their more privileged Jamaican counterparts, as we shall see, they did not seem to function in an essentially different racial identification in relation to whites and whiteness. Where towards emancipation Jamaica's privileged free people of colour were sending their own petitions to the Crown, ostensibly '...concerned with their own narrow interests, and pointedly avoiding any alliance with either [black or white] group',⁹⁸ certain members among Cayman's free people of colour were completely associating themselves with their white counterparts, yet with a greater deal of symbiosis and intimacy than those less privileged counterparts across the Caribbean, who aspired to whiteness at the continued derogation of their black

⁹⁷ Jerome Handler, *The Unappropriated People: Freedmen in the Slave Society of Barbados* (Kingston: University of the West Indies Press, 2009), p.149.

⁹⁸ Gordon Lewis, *Main Currents in Caribbean Thought: The Historical Evolution of Caribbean Society in Its Ideological Aspects, 1492-1900* (Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 2004), p.218.

ancestry, only to be constantly and miserably rejected by that which they aspired to.⁹⁹ Indeed, there is some evidence of coloured slaveholders among the Caymanian petitioners who displayed their ultimate stance both on the societal importance of slavery and the slave as morally bankrupt and without social grace. Caymanian surnames like Ebanks, Tatum, and Parsons stand out here.¹⁰⁰

Thus expressing themselves through the understanding that emancipation was but a foregone conclusion, the coloured Caymanian petitioners pushed not for the 'continuance of slavery in their Island, but [that] the same measure of compensation meted to the slave owners in Jamaica be not withheld from them.'¹⁰¹ They clearly realized the economic disruption that would ensue, and were seeking to ensure their compensation. Yet if the freedmen, both white and coloured alike, really had their way, slavery would have continued indefinitely. Indeed, there was the general opinion among the slaveholders that slaves must remain slaves, or else the wives and children of the former '[would] be at the mercy of men who [were] suddenly to receive a boon of so extraordinary a nature, that their capability of fully appreciating it is a matter of considerable doubt.'¹⁰² Although they admitted that the slaves on Grand Cayman were generally 'peaceable', 'the proposed change in their

⁹⁹ For more on the beliefs and actions of this larger group of coloured freedmen, see especially Heuman, 'The Social Structure of Slave Societies', pp.138-168.

¹⁰⁰ See Memorialists to the Earl of Mulgrave (Jamaican Governor), December 13, 1833, PRO, CO 137/189, f. 40.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰² *Ibid.*

condition [was] fraught with danger, and it [behoved] everyone to prepare for any evil consequence that may ensue.’¹⁰³ The slaveholders’ assertion meant that a pro-slavery ideology remained vibrantly alive toward emancipation. In the words of Gordon Lewis, such an ideology ‘...was at once an economic institution and a political system; and it left its indelible mark, in varying degrees, on the collective social psychology of the...Caribbean [people in question.]’¹⁰⁴ In other words, given their investment in slavery and the slave, free people of colour, like whites, had internalized the normalcy and necessity of slavery.

This is not to say, however, that free coloureds on Grand Cayman functioned independently of the racializing edicts of whites in the period up to 1834. For instance, with regard to an act for levying a tax, taxes were raised on ‘Dwelling Houses occupied by Whites, free Coloureds and free Blacks, [and] assessed according to [the] value of the house valued by Magistrates and Representatives.’ So too did racial classifications extend to ‘vessels according to tonnage’, and ‘canoes over 16 feet in length.’¹⁰⁵ Colour and race still informed day-to-day issues on Grand Cayman, confirming a racist society. Yet this distinction did not seem to damn the free people of colour to an inferior social position, given both the absence of any debilitating legislation against them, and the fact that by 1834 the slaveholders

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁴ Lewis, *Main Currents*, p.218.

¹⁰⁵ Local Laws of Grand Cayman (1831-1834), PRO, CO 137/194, ff. 42-43.

among them were expressing their unity with whites regarding their abhorrence of the soon-to-be-freed slave.

In contrast, where life had changed for Jamaican free coloureds, and drastically for the worst by 1800 (only to improve in the year leading up to emancipation), Cayman's equivalents were in a far more elevated social position by 1802, even if Grand Cayman was not a great and prosperous slave society. Nonetheless, where the elite among Jamaica's free people of colour were, in their own selfish way, securing their social freedoms by countenancing the continuation of a superior/inferior racist binary, Grand Cayman's slaveholding equivalent, in its apparent entirety, did not seem to develop a discrete sense of identity in relation to whiteness.¹⁰⁶ In the long run, it was constitutional equality that privileged Jamaican free people of colour craved, yet it was not simply a matter of wanting to be white, as it was finding themselves in a 'third party in a system built for two', thereby striving to secure their equality in a society premised upon ethnocentrism, racism and racialism.¹⁰⁷ Conversely, and based on the available, if limited, evidence which has been outlined above, free people of colour on Grand Cayman to 1834 were, to a

¹⁰⁶ See especially, in its entirety, Gad Heuman, *Between Black and White: Race, Politics, and the Free Coloreds in Jamaica, 1792-1865* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1981); see also Franklin Knight, *The Caribbean: The Genesis of a Fragmented Nationalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), chapter 5; Mervyn Alleyne, *Construction of Representation of Race and Ethnicity in the Caribbean and the World* (Kingston: University of West Indies Press, 2002), chapters 5 and 8.

¹⁰⁷ See Arnold Sio, 'Marginality and Free Coloured Identity', p.150.

significant extent, accepted contributors to Grand Cayman's slave society and the logic needed to sustain it.

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In conclusion, Bodden's idea that Grand Cayman was a 'society with slaves as opposed to a slave society' conflicts with the idea that the consistently greater number of slaves proved social and economic mainstays of developing Caymanian society, in spite of claims that because historical Cayman society was based on a seafaring economy, it could not have really been a true slave society.¹⁰⁸ Seafarers though many of them were, Caymanian whites and free people of colour did own slaves who were subjugated as inferior seamen and other skilled labourers, domestics or field hands, thereby imposing upon this society notions of inferiority and superiority defined in racist and racialist terms. Regardless of the effective end of Grand Cayman's cotton boom by 1808, that Grand Cayman's slaveowners remained faithful to the institution of slavery also reflected their tenacious slavocratic will. Indeed, in slavocratic terms, the social position of the enslaved in relation to freemen in historical Cayman society should assume preeminence and not any noticeable atypical numerical actuality of that position as affected by a harsh, isolated existence; noticeable though these social actualities might have been, the fact remains that slaves still outnumbered their masters to emancipation, a numerical actuality that strengthens the idea that slavery was an entrenched, social

¹⁰⁸ See Amit, 'A Clash', pp. 579-582.

institution in Grand Cayman. Indeed, if we choose to identify the dynamics of a slave society with the preceding analyses, then Bodden's assertion that 'slave societies were those societies where free whites were significantly outnumbered by their black slaves' is effectively challenged, and perhaps even cancelled out.¹⁰⁹

2.4 Phase Three: August, 1834 – May, 1835: The Aftermath of Emancipation

British West Indian slaves were required to undergo a period of apprenticeship after the abolition of slavery in 1834. Non-field labourers would undergo apprenticeship until 1838, while their field counterparts would be released from their apprenticeship in 1840 (children under 6 were to be automatically freed).¹¹⁰ This period would "prepare" them for unfettered economic, social, and political freedoms, although many West Indian historians view apprenticeship as just another form of slavery.¹¹¹ For them, apprenticeship was really established as a way to appease angry planters by ensuring the cheap to free labour of former slaves, as one of the conditions of the system was that the apprentice would only receive a wage if he or she worked more than a forty-five hour week.¹¹² Nonetheless, many of

¹⁰⁹ Personal Interview with Roy Bodden, pp.4-6.

¹¹⁰ O Nigel Bolland, 'The Politics of Freedom in the British Caribbean', in *The Meaning of Freedom: Economics, Politics, and Culture after Slavery*, edited by Frank McGlynn *et al.* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1992), p.118.

¹¹¹ See, for instance, David Eltis, *Economic Growth and the Ending of the Slave Trade* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987); Paul Craven *et al.*, 'The Criminalization of "Free Labour": Master and Servant in Comparative perspective', in *Unfree Labor in the Development of the Atlantic World*, edited by Paul Lovejoy (Oxford: Routledge, 1994), pp.71-101; W.K. Marshall, 'Apprenticeship and Labour Relations in Four Windward Islands', in *Abolition and Its Aftermath: The Historical Context*, edited by David Richardson (London: Frank Cass, 1985), pp.203-223.

¹¹² Bolland, 'The Politics of Freedom', p.118; see also Green, *British Slave Emancipation*, pp.134-135.

the apprentices were keen to exercise their rights as freedmen and women, and in many British colonies they simply refused to work for their former slave masters.

Largely because of the apprentices' intransigence, apprenticeship in the British West Indies was brought to an abrupt end for all blacks in 1838.¹¹³ In Trinidad and Jamaica especially, black-white tensions were quite severe in the immediate post-emancipation phase. Any such tension is revealed both in the planters' efforts to coerce their ex-slaves to continue to work for them, and the apprentices' recalcitrant stance – which was precipitated by their new legal freedom – to distance themselves from any lifestyle resembling an enslaved experience; both efforts are at once irreconcilable: on the one hand there were the planters who sought to force their apprentices to work for them through 'enactment of laws [restricting] emigration and vagrancy, various forms of taxation to pressure people into wage labor, the use of wage-rent and advance-truck systems to make laborers dependent, and the development of systems of police, magistrates and prisons to punish those who broke the labor laws.'¹¹⁴ Yet on the other hand, these 'techniques', as O. Nigel Bolland calls them, could not work in any truly pervasive way because the former slaves were keen to exercise their freedom in the fullest sense of the word. This is

¹¹³ See, for instance, Henry Brougham and Vaux, *Immediate Emancipation: the Speech of Lord Brougham in the House of Lords on Tuesday, February 20, 1838, on Slavery and the Slave Trade* (New York: Cornell University Library, 1992; digital image of the original 1838 document); see also, London Anti-Slavery Society, *New Apprenticeship in the British Colonies* (New York: Book Surge Publishing, 1992; digital image of the original 1838 document).

¹¹⁴ Bolland, 'The Politics', pp.119, 120.

why '[t]he movement of the ex-slaves from the estates in the immediate post-emancipation years was not [so much] a flight from the horrors of slavery...[but] a protest against the inequities of freedom.'¹¹⁵ It was for this mass exodus, as it were, that the number of Jamaican estates, for instance, fell from 646 on the eve of emancipation to 330 by 1854; similarly, Trinidad experienced an exponential increase in black smallholders after 1832.¹¹⁶ By ensuring their freedom from the estate whose governing framework existed on the principles of racial discrimination and

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p.127; The 'flight from the estates' theory has been subjected to deeper particularistic scrutiny beyond the pale of Bolland's classic phenomenological critique. For instance, Douglas Hall argues that the decline of Jamaica's national economy occurred not so much because of the apprentices' flight from the estate, but because of the introduction of the Sugar Duties Act of 1846 that ended the 'British West Indies monopoly in the British sugar market' (Smith, 1995; 104; Hall, 1959, 1978). Similarly, Claude Levy (1980) agrees with Hall, but goes on to argue, in the context of Barbados, that former apprentices and planters worked in relative harmony only until after sugar prices declined and food prices rose, developments that served to further demonize blacks as smaller planters, resentful still of emancipation, were forced to sell their estates. Elsewhere, scholars like Hugh Paget (1964; 39-40), Rawle Farley (1964; 52-57), Sidney Mintz (1974) and Jean Besson (2002) have, to varying degrees of contradiction, argued that the flight from the estates represented the apprentices' 'efforts to make the most of their emancipation' (Smith; 110) as evidenced in the development of existing free villages where black men and women grew their own provisions and created their own land rules both as gestures of resistance towards their former masters and as reaffirmations of their continually developing status as autonomous, 'reconstituted' protopeasants (see p.31 in my Literature Review for a definition of this term). The most unconventional, and indeed most refreshing, rereading of the flight from the estates theory comes from Diana Paton who, largely following Bridget Brereton's earlier cursory work on the matter (1999; 77-107), strives to highlight the indispensability of freedwomen's refusal to continue to work on the estates after emancipation in accordance with a newfangled and liberating black ethos, and how this condition, in the Jamaican context, proved the lynchpin for the formation of conventional gender relations among "autonomous" Jamaican blacks. See Hall, *Five of the Leewards, 1834-1870: The Major Problems of the Post-Emancipation period in Antigua, Barbuda, Montserrat, Nevis and St. Kitts* (St. Laurence, Barbados: Caribbean University Press, 1971); 'The Flight from the Estates Reconsidered: The British West Indies, 1838-1842', in the *Journal of Caribbean History*, vol.10, no.11 (1978), p.23; Kevin Smith, 'A Fragmented Freedom: The Historiography of Emancipation and Its Aftermath in the British West Indies', in *Slavery and Abolition*, vol.16, no.1 (1995), pp. 101-130; Claude Levy, *Emancipation, Sugar and Federalism: Barbados and the West Indies, 1833-1876* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida Press, 1980); Hugh Paget, 'The Free Village System in Jamaica', in *Caribbean Quarterly*, vol.10 (1964), pp.39-50; Rawle Farley, 'The Rise of Village Settlements in British Guiana', in *ibid.*, pp. 52-57; Sidney Mintz, *Caribbean Transformations* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, 2nd edition); Jean Besson, *Martha Brae's Two Histories: European Expansion and Caribbean Culture-Building in Jamaica* (Kingston: Ian Randle, 2002).

¹¹⁶ Bolland, 'The Politics', p.126.

inequality, former slaves had established an enduring symbol of freedom which no pro-planter legislation could quell. Nevertheless, we should endeavour to keep in mind that despite this enduring symbol of freedom, many apprentices still found themselves labouring for their former masters. For instance, those apprentices in Jamaica's parish of St. Ann that could do no better but to remain with their former masters, according to one report, 'languish[ed] under a virtual reign of terror.'¹¹⁷ Elsewhere, such criticisms were also reserved for colonies like Barbados and St. Vincent where former slaveholders, keen still to secure free to cheap labour, continued to adhere to the understanding that "everyone has a right to do with his nigger what he pleases";¹¹⁸ as shown earlier in this paragraph, this right, for instance, did not preclude making it a legal crime for the apprentices to 'leave plantation employment in search of improved conditions.'¹¹⁹

Apprenticeship was never enforced in Antigua or Bermuda, and in the Cayman Islands it ended earlier than in other British West Indian territories.¹²⁰ Caymanian

¹¹⁷ Quoted from John Anderson *et al.*, *Between Slavery and Freedom: Special Magistrate John Anderson's Journal of St. Vincent during the Apprenticeship* (Kingston: University of the West Indies Press, 2001), p.181 [see especially footnote 189].

¹¹⁸ *Ibid*, p.181.

¹¹⁹ Pedro Welch, 'Barbados', in *African Caribbeans: A Reference Guide*, edited by Alan West-Durran (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Publishing, 2003), p.37.

¹²⁰ Indeed, it should be here added although Antigua and Bermuda did not adopt apprenticeship in title, their ex-slaves were still prone to threats and mistreatment from their former masters vis-à-vis eviction from their estate dwellings if they did not work at a satisfactory level. See, for instance, Mary Turner, 'The British Caribbean, 1823-1838', in *Masters, Servants and Magistrates in Britain and the Empire, 1562-1955*, edited by Douglas Hay (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2004), pp.303-32; Seymour Drescher, *The Mighty Experiment: Free Labor Versus Slavery in British Emancipation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), chapter 9.

apprentices were absolutely manumitted eight months after the end of slavery, on May 3, 1835.¹²¹ In comparative terms, it is not immediately obvious why Grand Cayman's ex-slaves were released from apprenticeship so quickly. Tensions might have been building between slave masters and their former slaves-turned-apprentices, but Grand Cayman represented nothing new in this regard. In fact, given Grand Cayman's Panglossian-like slave society, it would have been more likely for the former slaves there to continue on in a similarly peaceful way as apprentices. Be this as it may, and towards furnishing a satisfactory response for such an atypical termination, we should remain mindful that former Caymanian slaveholders, both white and coloured, like their counterparts across the British West Indies, resented the social changes that slavery and then apprenticeship had brought about.

In the previous historical phase I have shown how Caymanian slave-owners claimed that their slaves were in no way ready to be freed, and were afraid of the "evil" that would ensue after emancipation. However, I contend that the potential disturbances read into the hasty transition from slavery to apprenticeship to freedom had less to do with the apprentices themselves and more to do with the former slaveholders, who refused to acknowledge and promote blackness in any

¹²¹The proclamation which set the Cayman apprentices absolutely free can be found in the Marquis of Sligo to the Earl of Aberdeen, May 14, 1835, PRO, CO 137/198, ff. 382-295.

form of freedom. Therefore, when a detachment of thirty men of the 2nd West India Regiment arrived in September, 1834 – a month after emancipation – under orders to preserve the peace between apprentices and their former slaveholders, the latter were keen to express their discomfort with being, in effect, instructed by the few black Privates of the detachment who themselves were commanded by white officers.¹²²

By February 1835, two of the detachment's black members had been imprisoned on 'charges of [l]arceny and [r]ape.' Interestingly, in the second of these cases, the charge of rape against one black Private proved false as the apprentice who was allegedly raped made it later known that her master had forced her to perjure herself; and in the first case, Chief Magistrate of Grand Cayman at the time, John Drayton, intimated that the plaintiff, Thomas McArthur, leveled his blame against the black Private on hearsay evidence.¹²³ Nonetheless, together with the likelihood that the Privates would not have received a fair trial, it was simply too dangerous for the soldiers to remain in Grand Cayman and sometime in late March, Jamaican governor Lord Sligo 'requested the Commander of the Naval Force there...to pick them up, and by that means their lives [would] be saved.' Beyond this, Governor Sligo expressed that 'Did we think that the men [the accused black Privates] were

¹²² Roger Buckley, *Slaves in Red Coats: The British West India Regiments, 1795-1815* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979), pp.16-17.

¹²³ John Drayton, Custos, and Robert Thompson, Justice of Peace, to Sligo, February 6, 1835, PRO, CO 137/198, f.47.

actually culpable we would be the last to interfere But from what we have seen and known we do not think they are...'¹²⁴ Such an admission inexorably drew attention to the entitled, racist, and antagonistic spirit that existed among the former Caymanian slaveholders.

Nonetheless, the departure of the black troops of the detachment did not indicate the resolution of the tensions between former whites and blacks which had been stubbornly in place since emancipation. In 1836, for instance, American consul to Grand Cayman and in-law of the Boddens, Nathaniel Glover, stood accused of whipping an erstwhile apprentice 'in the street without sufficient cause.' Also, in March, 1835 Thomas Saturn took an apprentice of James Watler, Sooky, to court for no other apparent reason than spite. Saturn had deliberately killed a sow belonging to Sooky's mother. Witnessing the event, Sooky was overcome with rage, 'went into the house and found one of the Plaintiff's fowls, brought it out and twisted its neck round saying "there so that."' Outraged, Saturn took her to court, but lost the case on the grounds that Dr. Thompson labeled him the aggressor in the incident.¹²⁵ Dr. Thompson was a special stipendiary Magistrate who had been sent to Grand Cayman during its short-lived apprenticeship period to oversee the maintenance of law and order in that colony. In yet another petty instance, a man referred to as Mr.

¹²⁴ PRO, CO, 137/198, f.50.

¹²⁵ See Kieran, *Lawless Caymanas*, p.54; see also Extract from Dr. Robert Thompson's Diary, March 28, 1835, PRO, CO 137/198, ff.334-335.

Collins took his female apprentice, Silos, to court because she had refused to carry a basket of provisions, the contents of which belonged to him and other Negroes. Dr. Thompson again adjudicated in favour of the apprentice, implying that Collins's decision to take his apprentice to court proved petty in light of the fact that Silos served him faithfully and had worked tirelessly for him on a local provision ground.¹²⁶ Indeed, Dr. Thompson stood out against many of his counterparts across the British West Indies who 'were appointed [as special stipendiary Magistrates] to supervise the equitable functioning of apprenticeship.' Unlike his counterparts in other colonies 'who were patronized by the planters, [thereby not able to] provide adequate legal protection for the apprentices', Dr. Thompson seemed genuinely concerned to fulfill his duty towards the maintenance of law and order and fairness on Grand Cayman.¹²⁷

Nicholas Sykes has raised the interesting question as to why apprenticeship was so quickly abolished in Cayman and not Jamaica.¹²⁸ The surrounding reasons for this oddity perhaps find their location in an earlier time, in Grand Cayman's unique legislative and isolated status combined with the British abolitionist movement, which had gained great momentum by the abolition of the African slave trade to the British West Indies in January 1808. The abolition of the slave trade was

¹²⁶See Kieran, *Lawless Caymanas*, p.54; see also PRO, CO 137/198, ff.334-335.

¹²⁷ Cf. Bolland, 'The Politics', p.135.

¹²⁸ Nicholas Sykes, *A Study of Church and State in the Cayman Islands: The Dependency Question* (London: The Ecclesiastical Corporation, 1996), chapter 1.

accompanied by the imperative to improve the slaves' condition in addition to ferreting out the illegal trading of slaves, although an inter-island slave trade network continued to emancipation.¹²⁹ All slave-owners in the British West Indies therefore had to register their slaves; this registration was mandatory and was implemented by 1816.¹³⁰ The only apparent exceptions to the slave register were the Cayman Islands, British Honduras (Belize), and Anguilla, whose insignificance as large-scale plantation colonies may have secured their obscurity in this regard.¹³¹ Therefore, when emancipation came to the British West Indies in 1834, thereafter any previous official slave returns provided a simple way of compensating the former slave-owners. However, as Caymanian slave-owners had not registered their slaves, they were not covered in the compensation provision of the Emancipation Bill of July 13, 1833. Afraid that they would get no compensation for their slaves, a hasty and largely incomplete slave return was created in April 1834, which meant that the former Caymanian slaveholders were, upon emancipation, able to claim compensation which amounted to a little over £44, 764.¹³² However, another legal problem presented itself: since Caymanian slaves had not been initially registered in 1816, should they remain apprentices when a lack of

¹²⁹ Although the British West Indian inter-island trade was prohibited in 1824, slaves continued to be sold through this method to 1834. See, for instance, Eltis, *Economic Growth*, p.8; see also Clarence Smith, *Cocoa and Chocolate, 1765-1914* (London: Routledge, 2000), p.149.

¹³⁰ See, for instance, Emilia Viotti da Costa, *Crowns of Glory, Tears of Blood: The Demerara Slave Rebellion of 1823* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), p.33; Gelian Matthews, *Caribbean Slave Revolts and the British Abolitionist Movement* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2006), p.16.

¹³¹ Craton, *Founded*, p.71.

¹³² See Grand Caymanas Slave Returns, 1834, f.11.

documentation suggested that they were never legal slaves to begin with? This actuality was further exacerbated in the face of a restless apprentice population being constantly provoked by their masters. As Craton asserts, '[i]t was in this context [of potential civil unrest], prompted partly by the fact that the slaves had never been duly registered before 1834, that governor Sligo [and the wider British government] decided to free the apprentices in the Cayman Islands immediately.'¹³³

2.5 Phase Four: 1835 – 1845: Religion, Caymanian Ethnocentrism and Bold Blackness

After the abrupt abolition of apprenticeship in the Cayman Islands, racial tensions remained high. Between March, 21 and 24, 1836, almost a year after the dissolution of Caymanian apprenticeship, local meetings were convened at the premises of various Magistrates.¹³⁴ All Caymanians were invited, regardless of race and previous social status. However, the meetings were not to represent a variety of community issues, but instead became fixated upon the conduct of the former apprentices, especially where their work habits were concerned. For instance, planter and Magistrate Robert Stephen Watler complained that although he had allowed his former apprentices to continue to live on his property without paying rent, he could not afford to employ any field labourers among them given that they were demanding extremely high wages. Magistrate Abraham Fuertado agreed:

¹³³ Craton, *Founded*, p.82.

¹³⁴ See the Thompson Report, 1836, PRO, CO 137/209, ff. 394-400.

‘When the Negroes are asked to hire’, he began, ‘they demand very exorbitant wages and then unless they are attended to will not work any thing like the value of the pay they receive[sic].’¹³⁵ Magistrate Phelan concurred, stating that, with few exceptions, ‘they have not generally fallen into the practice of working for wages...but pursue their former habits.’ The habits in question, according to Phelan, included cultivating provisions only for their subsistence, lack of respect for their former masters, and laziness. Thus, for prominent Caymanians like Stephen Watler, Richard Phelan, Abraham Fuertado, James Coe Junior, and Nathaniel Glover, the former apprentices had simply become more indolent in their behaviour.¹³⁶

Many former Caymanian slaveholders were clearly angry with what they regarded to be the newfound indolence of the former apprentices, and did not appreciate the bristling sense of independence among them. In the first instance, 43 petitioners, headed by Chief Magistrate John Drayton, revealed their unease about the former apprentices in a petition to Queen Victoria in 1837. Indeed, two years after the dissolution of apprenticeship in the Cayman Island, former Caymanian slaveholders continued to betray a line of thinking prevalent among all other British West Indian colonies, that of the necessity of blacks’ gradual transition into freedom. The remainder of the British West Indies by this time, with the exception

¹³⁵ Kieran, *Lawless Caymanas*, p.99; see also PRO, CO 137/209, f.399.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, p.97; see also PRO, CO 137/209, f.397.

of Antigua (and Bermuda which was further out in the open Atlantic), still functioned under a system of apprenticeship, and the racist attitude of the Caymanian petitioners concerning their former slaves was thinly veiled in moralistic considerations. Securing themselves as the moral bastions of their society, the former Caymanian slaveholders pleaded with Her Majesty's government for the provision of funds intended for the 'moral and religious improvement of that class of freed persons...' 'Our means [towards this improvement] are very limited', they stated, 'and the lately emancipated Negroes exceed us in population.'¹³⁷ In light of the numerically preponderant former apprentices, were the former slaveholders concerned about an uprising? Indeed, all traces of British military presence had been removed from Cayman soil on June 3, 1836, a little over a year after the abolition of apprenticeship, and this had been due to Grand Cayman's precipitously peaceful nature after a period of civil-racial unrest.¹³⁸ Therefore, although former Caymanian slaveholders may have "felt" themselves privy to harm by the recently freed population, their mentality here seemed to be more rooted in derogatory and racist understandings of blackness that had been in place since the slavery era.

Despite the racist understandings that had been thrust upon them, by 1840 black Caymanians were exercising their own agency based on what they thought were

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, p.2.

¹³⁸ See Captain Pack to Sligo, June 14, 1836, PRO, CO 137/199, f.283; see also Kieran, *Lawless Caymanas*, pp.69-71.

their God-given rights as British subjects. Since their elevation to apprentices in 1834, these Caymanians were becoming more and more aware of their “free” position within society. So too did they understand that they had to voice concerns that were intimately tied to their freedom if they were to indeed ensure their already fragile “equality.” It was such an understanding that provided the basis for an emerging Caymanian subaltern – or lower class – consciousness. “The subaltern” was coined by the postcolonial school of literary and cultural theory in the 1970s, and refers to the recognizably antagonistic national and cultural efforts by the lower classes against a “ruling” hegemonic imperial regime; the term seems apt in the context of this study even if Caymanian whites were not imperialists proper – given their isolated status throughout colonial history, I am inclined to see them more as creoles with a heightened sense of belonging to their homeland – although they betrayed imperialist thinking symptomatic of the more prosperous British West Indian planter class even after emancipation.¹³⁹ Representing by 1840, a slight majority of a Caymanian population of about 2000 inhabitants, former Caymanian apprentices had extended their earlier strategy of resistance beyond labour absenteeism and situational insolence. Most of them may have been illiterate, but

¹³⁹ For a more comprehensive understanding of the subaltern concept in this light, see, for instance, Ranajit Guha (ed.), *Subaltern Studies: Writings on South Asian History and Society*, vol. 3 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994); Partha Chatterjee and Gyanendra Pandey (eds.), *Subaltern Studies: Writings on South Asian History and Society*, vol. 7 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994); Manu Bhagavan *et al.*, *Claiming Power From Below: Dalits and the Subaltern Question in India* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

equipped with the understanding of themselves as legitimate nationals, they continued to challenge an ethnocentric Caymanian sensibility.

By 1840, two Mico Charity Schools had been established in Grand Cayman.¹⁴⁰ As in Jamaica and elsewhere in the Caribbean, these schools were initially established for the apprenticeship populations.¹⁴¹ Non-denominational in nature, the Mico schools sought both to provide a comprehensive basic education for children of black ancestry and to supply the general apprentice population with the gospel of Jesus Christ.¹⁴² It was with this intention that Andrew Malcolm, a teacher employed by the Mico Charity, arrived in Grand Cayman in July of 1838. Four months later, the first of the two Mico charity schools had been opened in Bodden Town, which had the highest nonwhite population on the island.¹⁴³ Beginning with just 23 black and coloured children, by May, 1839 this number had increased to 97 children ‘...from all backgrounds’,¹⁴⁴ The latter actuality suggested the closing rift between whiteness and blackness, thereby implying a progressive shift towards a society where considerations of colour were becoming more and more attenuated. However, there

¹⁴⁰ CINA (compiler), *Three Petitions by Caymanians: Two Petitions from 1840, July 8, 1840* [sic] (George Town: CINA, 1995), p.2

¹⁴¹ See, for instance, Carl Campbell, ‘Denominisation and the Mico Charity Schools in Jamaica, 1835-1842’, in *Caribbean Studies*, no.10 (1971), pp.152-172.

¹⁴² See Shirley Gordon, *A Century of West Indian Education* (London: Longman, 1963), p.23.

¹⁴³ CINA, *Three Petitions*, p.4.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

remained strong opposition to Caymanian people of colour with regards to their educational and religious betterment.¹⁴⁵

Not long after the opening of the second charity school in George Town, in 1940, Malcolm departed Cayman; his departure had been largely prompted by the opposition he had been receiving 'from some of those who had [once] owned slaves, [and] who criticized him for identifying too much with the needs and conditions of the ex-slaves.'¹⁴⁶ As such, on July 8, 1840, 21 'black and brown people' of Bodden Town placed their mark on a petition meant for the directors of the Mico Charity in London (because they could not write, they simply signed an x where their names should have been signed). After expressing their sorrow to the directors of the Mico Charity concerning Malcolm's departure, referring to him as a 'good and great man', the petitioners' penned understandings of the former Caymanian slaveholders is clear: '...we are very sorry that [Mr. Malcolm]...has a great many enemies but [t]hey are not among our class, he is persecuted by a greater part of the whites, but without a cause...' The petitioners expressed that had it not been for Malcolm's presence 'we would have been this day, as we were six years back',¹⁴⁷ referring not to the period of apprenticeship but to slavery. Evidently fearful that their rights as British subjects were being constantly undermined, disfranchised

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p.7.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p.5.

coloured and black Caymanians realized that their continued agency, or its lack thereof, rested substantially within the realms of education and religion. In this sense, their cry in the second petition that 'we [will] perish' upon Mr. Malcolm's departure (this petition signed by some 80 persons),¹⁴⁸ indicates a great urgency that they be recognized not as retrogressive human beings, but as people ready and willing to progress along Westernizing lines. Therefore without someone to teach their children and preach the word of God – all Western civilizing elements – these Caymanians were well aware that their social inferiority would continue. And despite their illiteracy, theirs and their children's worth as human beings and subjects depended upon the tussle between British abolitionist enlightenment and what they considered an anachronistic Caymanian ethnocentrism.

In conclusion, despite the conflict that existed between former apprentices and their former masters, by 1844 the schism between them seemed to have contracted somewhat, on religious grounds at least. Indeed, the Methodist Church had come to Grand Cayman in 1837, and with the departure of the Anglican Church a year later, represented the only Protestant establishment on the island to 1844.¹⁴⁹ With only one religious mission on the island, black, mixed, and white Caymanians who were genuine enough in their commitment to Christianity had to find a way to worship

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁹ CINA (transcriber), Methodist Missionary Society Transcriptions, August 7, 1843 (George Town: CINA, 1992), p.5.

together in relative harmony. It was perhaps for this genuine commitment that Grand Cayman's chief white and near-white inhabitants began to invest in a religious organization that had been instrumental in the abolition of slavery in the British West Indies.¹⁵⁰ For instance, Richard Phelan, a 'highly respectable inhabitant and Magistrate...[afforded the mission] greater pecuniary help than any single Methodist on the island' by 1844.¹⁵¹ Phelan, a former slaveholder, had been at the centre of an earlier dispute with a black Private of the detachment of the 2nd West India Regiment in 1835,¹⁵² and had signed his name to the 1837 petition that called for the moral and religious rescue of the former apprentices. Thus Phelan's religious efforts, together with the 'cautious goodwill of most of the Magistrates' represented their willingness to at least worship with the formerly enslaved population in the Methodist spirit of coexistence among the races.¹⁵³ Nonetheless, in 1844 the

¹⁵⁰ Although many Methodist practitioners were invested in slavery, by 1784, the Methodist Church stood out in contrast to the Anglican Church in their declaration that slavery was 'contrary to the Golden Laws of God.' Together with the wider British Abolitionist Movement, led by Wilberforce, the Methodist Church had indeed taken a noticeable anti-slavery stance. See Joseph Franklin, *et al.*, *From Slavery to Freedom: A History of African Americans* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 2000), pp.113; see also Eric Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery* (Wilmington: North Carolina Press, 1994), p.153.

¹⁵¹ CINA (transcriber), Methodist Missionary Society Transcriptions, June 18, 1844 (George Town: CINA), p.7.

¹⁵² In March, 1835, Richard Phelan accused a black Private of swindling goods from his store although Phelan had allowed him to leave the store with the goods. Keen to keep the peace, Dr. Thompson decided that he would deduct the payment for the goods from the Private's pay which was on its way from Jamaica. Nonetheless, the Private visited Phelan to pay his outstanding debt a few days later, and although Phelan accepted the money he demanded that the Private leave his premises, chasing him out into the street and striking him several times. The Private in turn 'returned blows and beat Phelan well', before rendering a further three decisive blows on an apprentice who had joined the fray after taking up Phelan's offer that he would give any man £2 to beat the Private. See Thompson to Sligo, March 9, 1835, PRO, CO 137/198, f.266; see also, Kieran, *Lawless Caymanas*, pp.45-46.

¹⁵³ Quoted from Craton, *Founded*, p.119; See also CINA (transcriber), Methodist Missionary Society Transcriptions, July 11, 1842 (George Town: CINA, 1992), p.1.

Methodist Church had left Grand Cayman due to the fact that the Jamaican Wesleyans could no longer finance the mission there.¹⁵⁴

2.6 Phase Five: 1845 – c.1880s: Judicial, Economic, and Religious Developments in the midst of Economic Hardship and a Suspicious Caymanian Seafaring Morality

With an annual revenue of around £60 sterling by 1843, the economy of the Cayman Islands continued in decline to 1845 (and beyond), with an unverifiable number of Caymanians migrating to Ruatan off the Miskito Coast, as a better ‘livelihood [there was] more easily obtained due to richer soil’; besides moving to Ruatan as planters, Caymanian seamen by 1845 were catching most of their turtle along the Nicaraguan and Honduran coasts.¹⁵⁵ Large-scale cotton cultivation had ceased by apprenticeship, and agriculture in Grand Cayman served a decidedly local purpose and thus would not have constituted a substantial portion of the island’s export economy.¹⁵⁶ Similarly, although turtle was an important export, Caymanian seamen had made it known to the Presbyterian Reverend Hope Masterton Waddell in 1845 that because of the convergence of dangerous currents in Cayman waters, ‘Seamen who don’t call there for turtle, give [the islands] a wide berth.’ Indeed, seamen often misjudged their distance from Grand Cayman, and ‘when they had reckoned themselves thirty miles off...[instead found] their ships crashing on its reefs.’ ‘The Grand Cayman is a trap for ships’, Waddell remarked, ‘and catches more [victims]

¹⁵⁴ Williams, *A History*, pp.48-49.

¹⁵⁵ L. R. Fyfe, *Grand Cayman: Report of Official Visit Preceded by Minute of Instructions by His Excellency Sir H.W. Norman...Governor of Jamaica* (Kingston: Government Printing Establishment), p.9.

¹⁵⁶ See pp. 82-86.

perhaps than any other spot of equal extent in the world.’¹⁵⁷ Nonetheless, it is true that Caymanians took full financial advantage of wrecked ships, which by 1874 amounted to ‘...50% of the proceeds of sale.’¹⁵⁸ Two wrecking incidents immediately come to mind here: the wreck of the *Iphigenia* in 1874 and the wreck of the *Juga* in 1888. The former occurred on the coral reefs off Bodden Town. Bodden Town Magistrates quickly made their way to the wrecked ship ‘and told the captain that its condition was hopeless’, despite the fact that the ship’s hull had not been compromised. Bedlam thereafter ensued, the Magistrates offering ‘only token remonstrations as unauthorized wreckers cut down and carried off all the rigging and sails, purloined the loose ship’s stores and threatened to invade the officers’ quarters and below decks.’¹⁵⁹ The wreck of the Norwegian merchant ship the *Juga* occurred off Grand Cayman’s west coast in 1888. As with the *Iphigenia*, the crew members of the *Juga* experienced strong-arm tactics by Caymanian wreckers, who, at the backing of their Magistrates, were keen to secure their proceeds, although according to the ship’s captain, he did not acknowledge a receiver of wrecks. When the latter incident was later investigated by ‘Captain E. Rolfe of HMS *Pylades*’, the Caymanian wreckers were placed clearly in the wrong if simply on the omissive fact that Rolfe’s report did not mention an official receiver of wrecks;¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁷ Hope Masterton Waddell, *Twenty-nine Years in the West Indies and Central Africa: A Review of Missionary Work and Adventure 1829-1858* (London: Routledge, 1977, second revised edition), pp.216-217.

¹⁵⁸ Craton, *Founded*, p.216.

¹⁵⁹ Craton, *Founded*, pp. 215-216. See also PRO, CO 137/478, ff. 20-77.

¹⁶⁰ See Craton, *Founded*, p.217; see also PRO, CO 137/538, ff. 32-42.

theoretically, this meant that the Caymanians had committed an act of piracy according to the following nineteenth century statute:

Now piracy is only a term for sea-robbery...If any man shall be assaulted within that jurisdiction and his ship or goods violently taken away without legal authority, this is robbery and piracy. [If the inhabitants of a nearby island] shall...dispossess the master, and afterwards carry away the ship itself or any of the goods, or tackle, apparel or furniture, in any place where the Lord Admiral hath, or pretends to have jurisdiction, this is also robbery and piracy.¹⁶¹

Nonetheless, Captain Rolfe's concluding words on the matter begin to situate the occupational and cultural importance of wrecking for Caymanians, and the British proclivity to overlook any potentially illegal Caymanian wrecking despite the passing of the Wrecking and Salvage Law thirteen years earlier, which was created not only to protect shipowners and their insurers, but also gave them legal redress to unsolicited wrecking:¹⁶² 'Wrecking is one of the principal industries of the Cayman Islands', Rolfe began, 'and one which they thoroughly appear to understand and conduct in a straightforward and equitable manner.'¹⁶³

Together with the more unassuming, honest occupation of turtle fishing, which by the 1840s had shifted to the Miskito Coast, wrecking represented an important economic mainstay in Cayman during this historical phase. Unfortunately, there is

¹⁶¹ Quoted in Edward Lucie-Smith, *Outcasts of the Sea* (Hampshire: Paddington Press, 1978), p.8.

¹⁶² Craton, *Founded*, p.216.

¹⁶³ Quoted in Craton, *Founded*, p.217.

no available catalogue of the actual amount of revenue these seafaring occupations brought in at this time. Nonetheless, given the serendipitous nature of ships being wrecked, together with the meager financial yields of turtle-fishing, such occupations could not, on their own, sustain the economy of the Cayman Islands, although it is important to note that the very idea of seamanship provides established Caymanians their sense of traditional and historical worth as we shall see in the following section.

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In conclusion, major social and administrative improvements had taken place in the Cayman Islands by 1880. The islands formally came under the administrative control of Jamaica in 1865, ending their 130 years of relative isolation;¹⁶⁴ Jamaican laws thus became more applicable in the Cayman Islands, despite the Jamaican Assembly's vociferous assertion in 1834 that those islands were an altogether different jurisdiction and should take care of their own legislative affairs.¹⁶⁵ Additionally, in 1865 the Land Registration Act was ratified, marking the end of a hitherto vague right to land ownership, clarifying any such ownership and widening the means of acquiring title to land.¹⁶⁶ In addition to the return of the Methodist church in the 1860s, the Baptist and Presbyterian churches had been fully

¹⁶⁴ See An Act for the Government of the Cayman Islands, June 22, 1863, 27 Vict. Cap. XXXI, in *Laws of the Cayman Islands up to No. 12 of 1889* (Jamaica: Government Printing Establishment, 1889), pp.1-4; see also Craton, *Founded*, pp. 150-151.

¹⁶⁵ See Report of the Governor's proposal about Caymanas, September 20, 1835, PRO, CO 137/201, no. 958.

¹⁶⁶ Craton, *Founded*, pp.152-153.

established in the islands by the 1880s, and Caymanians of all colours proved willing vessels for Christianity.¹⁶⁷ Furthermore, the sister islands had been repopulated by 1833, and by productive families, among them the Fosters and Kirkonnells, who, by the 1880s, were engaged in that island's coconut industry, boat building, and merchant shipping enterprises.¹⁶⁸ Such developments lead us into the sixth phase of Cayman's history and the ways in which its occupational and social circumstances especially underpin pervasive traditional Caymanian lines of thought in the present.

¹⁶⁷ Williams, *A History*, p.48.

¹⁶⁸ Craton, *Founded*, p.176-178.

SECTION 3 DETERMINING THE DIRECTION(S) OF TRADITIONAL CAYMANIAN THOUGHT

3.1 Phase Six: 1880s – c. 1960s: Continued Hardship and Frames of Memory Specific to It: Historical Overview and Theoretical Orientation

Despite a stagnant economy, by the 1880s there were available job opportunities on Grand Cayman that paid comparatively good wages. For instance, carpenters and masons earned approximately 6 shillings per day, while agricultural labourers, undistinguished between male and female, made 3 shillings per day.¹ Of the latter wage, we can be certain that around the same time agricultural labourers in Cayman were better paid, for instance, than their counterparts in Antigua, who were paid between 1 shilling, 6 pence per day to 6 pence per day.² Indeed, to the labour riots of the 1930s, the labouring classes throughout most of the British West Indies experienced what Lawrence Nurse referred to as an ‘appalling material circumstance’ due to low wages, a situation which spoke of their continual economic powerlessness in societies whose social, political, and economic structures continued to benefit the wealthy few.³ Nonetheless, although there is a lack of evidence regarding the type of crops that Caymanian agricultural labourers grew and the amount exported in the 1880s, field labour wages at that time resembled the wages of the former apprentices after 1836, which ranged between 2 and 4 shillings per

¹ L. R. Fyfe, *Grand Cayman: Report of Official Visit Preceded by Minute of Instructions by His Excellency Sir H.W. Norman...Governor of Jamaica* (Kingston: Government Printing Establishment, 1887), p.9.

² This information was taken from Novelle Richards, *The Struggle and the Conquest* (New York: Seaburn Publishers, 2004, 2nd edition), p.34.

³ See Robert Alexander, *A History of Organized Labor in the English-speaking West Indies* (Westport: Greenwood Publishing, 2004), p.4.

day,⁴ although by the 1880s Cayman's agriculture sector had become relatively unimportant to the wider economy.

Local employment was not, however, limited to agriculture, carpentry, and masonry. In West Bay, Grand Cayman, the Grand Cayman Phosphate Company – established by a Jamaican merchant in May, 1884 – and the Carib Guano Company of Baltimore, Maryland had set up operations, employing anywhere 'from 25 to 50 labourers' with wages of 2 shillings, 6 pence per day.⁵ According to Caymanian Theophilus Bodden, speaking in 1990, his grandfather, an independent phosphate miner, had in the 1880s employed up to 335 men, providing vital employment for the otherwise economically beleaguered Cayman Islands.⁶ The product of highly fertilized rock, which was in turn used as agricultural fertilizer, phosphate was mined towards the interior of the island before being placed in trolleys and rolled to the coast on metal tracks. Between 1883 and 1889, Cayman phosphate was in great demand in Baltimore, although exact levels of exports are unclear.⁷ Nonetheless, by 1890 Cayman phosphate was no longer in so great a demand due to the opening up of large phosphate beds in western Florida, and the Grand Cayman Phosphate Company was forced to close that very year. The Carib Guano Company also

⁴ Fyfe, *Grand Cayman*, p.9.

⁵ Fyfe, *Grand Cayman*, p.10.

⁶ Quoted in Michael Craton, *Founded it Upon the Seas: A History of the Cayman Islands and Their People* (Kingston: Ian Randle Publishers, 2003), p.167.

⁷ *Ibid.*, pp.166-168.

proved short-lived, closing in 1892, although the American Guano company employed up to 50 Caymanians in the Swan Islands to 1900 (later to be discussed).⁸

Therefore, it was because of an unstable local economy, prone to the fluctuations of the wider American and Jamaican markets, that many Caymanians had to look outward for employment. It has earlier been shown in my history chapter that in the midst of a foundering island economy and depleted turtle supplies nearer to home, Caymanian seamen were, by the 1840s, forced to look to the Miskito Coast for turtle, but outside sources of remuneration did not end here. By 1887, some Caymanians had also found themselves in the Miskito Coast for several months out of the year engaged in 'planting operations.' Although we cannot be certain of the type of crop the Caymanian planter cultivated and how much they received for their efforts, their wages were simply described in L.R. Fyfe's report as 'good'.⁹ Furthermore, they were granted a plot of land 'out of which [they were able to live] whilst there, [and] they returned to George Town with filled pockets.'¹⁰

For six months out of the year by 1887, we can also be certain that 50 Caymanians toiled on the Swan Islands, located some 90 miles off the coast of Honduras, working for the American Guano company.¹¹ Guano is the amassed excrement of

⁸ Fyfe, *Grand Cayman*, p.10.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ *Ibid.*

seabirds and bats, which can be used as a crop fertilizer and had become very important to nineteenth century American farmers especially in light of its ability to create higher crop yields. And so, in a new spirit of colonialism, the 1856 U.S. Guano Act had enabled many American companies to virtually claim otherwise unimportant islands in the Pacific and Caribbean oceans where the valuable commodity was in abundance.¹² As such, the American Guano company was heavily invested in the three tiny Swan Islands of Great Swan, Little Swan, and Booby Cay which, combined, comprised no more than three square miles. Nonetheless, paid a sum of \$16 a month 'in American gold', according to Fyfe, Caymanian labourers returned to the Cayman Islands from the Swan Islands 'with a goodly sum in hand.'¹³

By 1900, then, the economy of the Cayman Islands was neither diverse nor strong; this especially indicated that Grand Cayman's economy was not a mature, sustainable one. Thus, any Caymanian migratory spirit, in light of a weak economy, hinged on finding receiving countries and islands with relatively stronger economies.¹⁴ Yet the general migratory trend of Caymanians was decidedly transient as they always returned home after a time. In the initial analysis, any Caymanian traditional sentiment in the sixth phase of Caymanian history would

¹² See David Dent, *The Legacy of the Monroe Doctrine: A Reference Guide to US Involvement in Latin America and the Caribbean* (Westport: Greenwood Publishing, 1999), p.155.

¹³ Fyfe, *Grand Cayman*, p.10.

¹⁴ Cf. Dudley Baines, *Migration in a Mature Economy: Emigration and Internal Migration in England and Wales, 1861-1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), chapter 1.

have been shaped both by the temporary migratory imperative and any social existence shaped on Cayman soil. Since the Caymanian experience was shaped in economic hardship, we should also anticipate any traditional-oriented thought in the present to be heavily invested in detailing the routine actualities of this experience and the Caymanian will to overcome any such hardship.

As such, we may, towards the 1960s, test the cultural merits of historical Caymanianness¹⁵ with its emphasis on ‘material poverty [and] hardship...’, while simultaneously determining the extent to which these emphases ‘...helped to shape traditional Caymanian expression into what it is today.’¹⁶ It is accordingly the purpose of the remainder of this section to assess the sentimental ways in which such a tradition has lived on into the present.

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Despite a bleak economic picture throughout Caymanian history, in 1887 Fyfe was quick to conclude that ‘[t]he loyalty and good feeling of the inhabitants of [the Cayman Islands] [were] beyond doubt....’ Beyond this, Fyfe found it easy to classify the Caymanian people as insular and unassuming, concerned only with their way of life: ‘[They] seem to live without care or anxiety of a serious nature; they have no interest beyond the [islands]...[and] they had no questions to ask us when we

¹⁵ Although I provide a fuller definition for Caymanianness later in this section, this term implicitly questions the perceived true nature of the established Caymanian in historical and cultural terms especially. See Section 1, pp. 52- 53.

¹⁶ Craton, *Founded*, p.191.

landed.’¹⁷ Yet at the moment of his arrival Fyfe could not have truly appreciated the full extent that the unassuming, peaceful Caymanian race was indeed bound by the ubiquity of economic hardship. Nonetheless, his descriptions of ancestral Caymanians shed light on a strain of present-day Caymanian traditional sentiment that is quick to invoke the historical traits of self-reliance and loyalty to the cultural homeland. These sentiments essentially underline the idea of *great hope*, reinforcing the notion of a perceived singularly historical Caymanian will to survive in an economically hard and materially bare existence. Young Caymanian and cultural activist Quincy Brown begins to capture this traditional perception:

Let us never forget from whence we came. We were poor; our fathers and grandfathers. Our men went to sea for there was not much work on the land. Caymanian seamen made a very favourable impression as they were emulous and hard working. As a native Caymanian I am proud of my maritime heritage and you should be as well. No electricity; doing homework by the light of a kerosene lamp. We were all reminded of those olden days in the aftermath of Hurricane Ivan some 16 months ago. Some folk even reverted back to the vintage caboose. The aftermath of Ivan reminded all of us from whence we came. We were more considerate, we shared, and we were concerned about our neighbour. And that is what I miss about the old-time Cayman days.¹⁸

¹⁷ ‘Enclosure No. 10, on the HMS *Mallard*’, August 30, 1887, in Fyfe, *Grand Cayman*, p.18

¹⁸ Quincy Brown, ‘Don’t Sell Out, Cayman’, in the *Caymanian Compass*, at <http://www.caycompass.com/cgi-bin/CFPnews.cgi?ID=1010438>, January 18, 2008; January 6, 2010.

Noted Caymanian seafarer and historian Percival “Will” Jackson also gives voice to traditional sentiments concerned with the indispensability of hardship and perseverance in Caymanian history and the ways in which present-day Caymanians seem to evoke these elements when the circumstances prove right:

There were many ways of survival that were known by the old settlers, Life was not easy, but when there's a will, a way is always found... So it was, all this was done in an effort to survive the hard times that surrounded their days. But [our forefathers] were men of courage who in the midst of great trials built their strength on strong hopes. They never gave up until there was nothing left to hold on to... From the fathers' persistent courage, and firm endurance, in a land of hardships, the Caymanian people may be grateful for what they have received and are able to call such a wonderful place home.¹⁹

In the initial analysis, Mr. Brown and Mr. Jackson are verbally honoring historically based Caymanian traits because they themselves are Caymanians and are thus attempting to establish a cultural link with their ancestors. Indeed, the implication here is that any fully realized sense of Caymanianness²⁰ evoked by this strain of traditional sentiment is wholly dependent on the evokers' faith in their past;²¹ which for them rests on the cultural conviction that regardless of the simple life of their ancestors – especially against the present-day opulence of Caymanians – the past

¹⁹ Will Jackson, 'A good look to the past', *Cayman Net News*, at <http://www.caymannetnews.com/Archive/Archive%20Articles/September%202002/Issue%20249%20Fri/A%20Good%20Look.html>, September, 2002; January 6, 2010.

²⁰ See section 1, page 5.

²¹ David Lowenthal, *The Past is a Foreign Country* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), p.16.

must be remembered because it provides them their historicity, and thereby becomes a pure, exclusivist, and sacred language in a multicultural, diluting present.

This tenacious aspect of a traditional Caymanian sentiment assumes even greater potency in light of the fact that throughout the first six decades of the twentieth century – long after Fyfe's 1887 report – economic hardship continued and thus many Caymanians had to make their way to Panama, Cuba, the Miskito Coast, Jamaica, and the United States in search of work. Indeed, between 1903 and 1914 an unverifiable number of Caymanians found work on the Panama Canal, while other Caymanians gained employment in Cuba, Jamaica, and the United States to the 1960s; yet other Caymanians, as I have recently shown, frequented the islands off the Miskito Coast as turtle-fishers or temporary planters. Although there is a lack of statistical information, national hero of the Cayman Islands Sybil McLaughlin, who was born in 1927, emphasizes the importance of emigration in this period. Within this emphasis rests the traditional theme of hardship. Mrs. McLaughlin's mother originated from Cayman Brac, and in the early 1930s went to 'the [United] States to look for work.' That her mother had to go to the United States in search of work begins to signal the extensive lack of profitable opportunities in the Cayman Islands at this time, and Mrs. McLaughlin notes that 'A lot of people went...either to the 'States or Cuba,...in those days to look for work.'²²

²² CINA, Interview with Sybil McLaughlin, February 11, 1993, p.2.

Mrs. McLaughlin's confirmation here, as simple and brief as it is, helps to illuminate the recent occupational picture I have painted both within and without the Cayman Islands towards the 1960s; her expression also indirectly reveals – across the islands' six historical phases – a noticeable awareness of a cultural way of life shaped and situated in history. By *cultural way of life*, I am referring to occupational ways of life shaped and sustained by historical circumstance;²³ in other words, as ancestral Caymanians became more and more aware of their singular existence, this awareness, from earliest time, was being shaped and sustained by the abiding presence of persistent economic hardship which underpinned any historically-derived Caymanian occupational pursuit. Thus, as these Caymanians sought to make a living both overseas and at home, they would have indeed been aware of their economically beleaguered plight, but in demonstrably real-time cultural terms they would not have been functioning in the consciousness that they were providing their Caymanian progeny their historical cultural worth. In this sense, the physical effect of historical economic hardship represents, 'not an event or action, but a meaning...'²⁴ In practical terms, this meant that Caymanian occupational actions associated with, say, turtle-fishing or thatch-palming represented cultural adaptations to a historical hardship. Yet, these occupations transcended the physical,

²³ See Toyoto Morimoto, *Japanese Americans and Cultural Continuity: Maintaining Language and Heritage* (London: Routledge, 1997), p.6.

²⁴ Cf. Easthope, *The Unconscious* (London: Routledge, 1999), p.1.

mundane sphere, accumulating potent traditional meaning as history progressed and evolved.

The analyses which follow strive to put the above theoretical frame to the test by determining the historicity of present-day Caymanian traditional sentiments, which largely come from the sixth phase of Cayman history, but which can also be recognized throughout the other historical phases that were looked at earlier. Such analyses thus are largely concerned with understanding various traditional sentiments within specific moments of history. Initially, I provide a brief background to Cayman's economic situation by 1900 and beyond, thereafter exploring the traditional sentiments of which I have just spoken. Indeed, I am particularly concerned with historical Caymanian circumstances both at home and abroad and the ways in which Caymanians who experienced these circumstances – together with younger Caymanians – understand themselves as established Caymanians. It is hoped that my analyses will enable us to confirm the extent of Roy Bodden's unsubstantiated implication that established Caymanians depend on traditional sentimentality to support their view that they are fundamentally different from both the rest of the Caribbean and a large expatriate labour force in present-day Cayman by virtue of those Caymanians' historical and/or ancestral existence.²⁵

²⁵ Roy Bodden, *The Cayman Islands in Transition: The Politics, History, and Sociology of a Changing Society* (Kingston: Ian Randle Publishers, 2007), p.2.

3.2 **The Functions of Memory and Remembering in Traditional Caymanian Sentiment**

Every historical source derived from human perception is subjective, but only the oral source allows us to challenge that subjectivity: to unpick the layers of [traditionalist] memory, dig back into its darkness, hoping to reach the hidden truth (Thompson 2000, p. 173).

3.2.1 Economic Background

When Frederick Sanguinetti was appointed as the first commissioner of the Cayman Islands in 1898, he sought to introduce sweeping administrative changes to the islands. For instance, he oversaw the appointment of the first government medical officer, J.G.S Tait, in 1900. In 1903 a shipping register had also been established; a full-time constabulary force was introduced in 1907, the same year that the new commissioner to Cayman, George Hirst, was appointed; a government savings bank was opened in Grand Cayman the following year; and the fourth education law was passed in 1920, making education compulsory to the age of 14.¹ Yet despite these major changes, the islands' economy remained beleaguered, and Caymanian men especially continued to travel abroad for work. Those Caymanian men that did remain, worked mainly as agricultural labourers – cultivating goods like avocados, mangos, pumpkins, tomatoes, yams, etc. – and as fishermen and construction workers. Caymanian women also worked, weaving thatch palm slippers, baskets, and rope for a living, or else working as domestics, cleaners, cooks, and laundresses;

¹ Cayman Islands timeline, 1503-1979, courtesy of the ESO.

all of this begins to confirm the limitations of the Caymanian economy in this period. Based on available evidence, day labourers in 1906, for instance, made 3 shillings per day while carpenters made 7 shillings in the same period; to 1909, these wages remained virtually unchanged from those of the 1880s. By 1948, day labourers made 7 shillings, 6 pennies while carpenters witnessed a 200% increase in daily wages, since at least the 1880s, to 25 shillings.² Together with the inconstant nature of these occupations and an average of four persons per household to 1970,³ Caymanians would have not been economically prosperous. We should also here take into account that basic goods (per pound) like flour, corn meal, sugar, fresh beef, pork, fish, beans, and rice, when combined, cost a total of almost 5 shillings by 1965, and so there would have been an emphasis on providing for the family's basic sustenance and perhaps little else.⁴

Thus in addition to the fact of relatively low wages, that more goods were being imported than exported, Cayman's cost of living remained high throughout the first six decades of the twentieth century. Cayman could not sustain itself on its own agricultural and maritime produce and thus imports outweighed exports. For instance, the period between 1904 and 1905 witnessed £20,840 of imports against £11,941 of exports; this indicated a balance deficit of £8,899. By 1930, in the midst of

² CINA (compiler), HMSO, Colonial Reports of the Cayman Islands, 1970, table 11.01 wages paid, 1906-70, p.49.

³ ESO, Population Censuses of 1970.

⁴ CINA (compiler), HMSO, Colonial Reports of the Cayman Islands, 1970, table 11.01, Cost of Living, 1948-1965, p.49.

the Great Depression, Cayman's trade deficit had more than trebled, totaling £30,312. By 1968, the islands' economy was only able to generate £4,691 worth of exports which included turtles' head, skin, shell and meat, shark skin and thatch palm rope, while imported goods totaled more than £6.5 million.⁵ Major imported goods included food and animals; beverages and tobacco; inedible crude materials; mineral fuels; animal and vegetable oils; chemicals; manufactured goods; machinery; and various other commodities. Cayman's main trading partners were the United States, the United Kingdom, Jamaica, and Canada.⁶

Despite any such hardship, Caymanians at home were willing to work as witnessed in the islands' relatively large labour force. By 1943, the gainfully employed population of Grand Cayman totaled 2,531 – 1,588 men and 943 women – out of an estimated population of 6,670 (figures for the sister islands are not available here); indeed, 38% of the Caymanian population was gainfully employed by this time.⁷ Seventeen years later, in 1960, the labour force stood at 2,229 males and 930 females out of a total population of 5,608; over 56% of the population engaged in gainful occupation, while unemployment remained relatively low at 3.7%.⁸

⁵ Imports, Exports, Balance of Visible Trade, 1904-79, in the *Economic and Financial Review* (George Town: Cayman Islands Government, 1982), p.32.

⁶ ESO, Import Statistics, October, 1978 (Grand Cayman: Cayman Island Government, 1979), p.33.

⁷ CINA (compiler), HMSO, Table 4.02 Gainfully Occupied Population, 1943, p.13.

⁸ CINA (compiler), HMSO, West Indies Population Census, 1960, p.14.

From the above statistical occupational and economic account, it can be seen that from 1900 to the 1960s the economy of the Cayman Islands was not a prosperous one with healthy fiscal surpluses. Nonetheless, like their ancestors from the early to mid-eighteenth century onward, the Caymanian workforce in the 1900-1960 period worked to provide themselves and their families with the basic necessities of life. This effort resonates throughout the six phases of Caymanian history and at this juncture seems bound to amass great symbolic meaning in Caymanian traditional sentiment.⁹ Beyond this, any such symbolism is further illuminated in its geographical displacement, that is, when Caymanians found themselves outside their country for the purpose of gainful employment. In traditional terms, the language of the Caymanians' adjustment to, and ostensible contentment in, an unassuming economic and social existence has become a tool not only through which learning and sharing of the past can take place, but has also substantively contributed to the resonant idea of Caymanian difference.¹⁰ What follows thus strives to assess this language and its concomitant resonance in traditional Caymanian thought both on and off Cayman soil.

⁹ Cf. Arthur Sloane *et al.*, *Labor Relations* (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 2009, 13th edition), p.2; see also, Edwyn Bevan, *Symbolism and Belief* (New York: McIntosh Press, 2008), p.12.

¹⁰ See Ann Swidler, *Talk of Love: How Culture Matters* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2003), p.12.

3.2.2 Perpetuation, Imagination, Subjectivity, and Community: The Effects of Caymanian Traditional Thought

When John Maloney spoke of the 'islands that time forgot', he was, in part, attempting to express that until the 1960s the economic and technological development of the Cayman Islands was at a virtual standstill.¹¹ Indeed, by 1953, there was only one international bank on Grand Cayman, and a small number of automobiles in a total population of just over 7,600.¹² Yet some Caymanians who grew up in the first six decades of the twentieth century still see their past in a positive manner, in spite of its material dearth; the memories of these older Caymanians remain either neutral or positive to this noticeable dearth spawned of historical circumstance. As a point of clarification, when I speak of recollective memory, like David Rubin, I am referring to 'the type of memory that occurs when an individual recalls a specific episode from their past experience.'¹³ It is within these recollections that Caymanian traditional thoughts are initially revealed, where traditional thought attempts either to draw attention to the loss of tradition, or else relays the past in sobering and/or positively selective terms in a more unperturbed manner. However, it should be kept in mind that although the legitimacy of traditional thought rests in such recollections, their superlative traditional valuation emanates from the extent of their perpetuity, that is, the extent to which they

¹¹ See John Maloney, 'The Islands Time Forgot', in *The Saturday Evening Post*, vol.222, no.41 (April 8, 1950), pp.38-39.

¹² Information taken from, Doren Miller (commentator), *Founded Upon the Seas* (George Town: Cayman Islands National Museum, 1975).

¹³ David Rubin, *Remembering Our Past: Studies in Autobiographical Memory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p.19.

resonate with younger Caymanian generations. This resonance, in its most vibrant form, would not only highlight a past-present cultural continuum between older and younger Caymanians, but can also evoke the subjective, imaginary and communitarian effects of traditional Caymanian thought. The following analyses attempt to assess these effects.

**

We begin with Adinah Whittaker – affectionately referred to as Miss Tooksie – who was born in Grand Cayman on June 28, 1907. Although in her 1991 interview Miss Tooksie demonstrated gaps and inconsistencies in her recollections – like not being able to remember how long she had been called Miss Tooksie, or whether the government all- age school was built before or after the 1932 Hurricane¹⁴ – she exhibits coherent recollections of certain aspects of growing up in an unassuming existence. In the initial analysis, like many people, young and old, Miss Tooksie’s memory has undergone long-term transience, that is, ‘forgetting that occurs with the passage of time.’¹⁵ Nonetheless, sentiments and understandings of the past become important not so much for their historical consistency and accuracy, but the coherency – even the incoherency – of their delivery; in other words, the degree of confidence with which the past is being recollected and related becomes an

¹⁴ CINA, Interview with Adinah Whittaker, March 7, 1991, pp. 1, 5, 6 and 8.

¹⁵ Daniel L. Schacter, *The Seven Sins of Memory: How the Mind Forgets and Remembers* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2002), p.12.

indispensable psycho-social descriptor of the informant's sincerest feelings of a lived past.¹⁶

Miss Tooksie's most vibrant recollection is at once unassuming as it is steeped in nostalgia; with a sense of pride, she details her student years in the only government secondary school on Grand Cayman by 1917:

Heather McLaughlin: ...But you yourself went to school in Bodden Town?

Adinah Whittaker: Oh, yes; oh, yes.

HMc: And you had to walk all that way?

AW: Oh, Rain, sun, or shine!

HMc: How long did it take you? So did you walk all the way down to Bodden Town by yourself?

AW: No, a crowd of children.

HMc: Now, on that long walk down there, how long did it take you?

AW: [Laughter] Some morning we couldn't walk because we was so late, we had to run it.

¹⁶ See, for instance, Adam Seligman *et al.*, *Ritual and its Consequences: An Essay on the Limits of Sincerity* (Oxford: Oxford University press, 2008), chapter 4.

HMc: Oh dear. I was noticing when I was driving along.
It really is a long way.¹⁷

Miss Tooksie's ostensibly gentle recollection of having to walk and/or run to school in any weather begins to express an unassuming Caymanian lifestyle especially as this related to getting around the islands: given the island's relatively low wages which would have largely been used to pay for basic necessities, the average Caymanian in the second decade of the twentieth century would not have had the financial wherewithal to purchase an automobile or a horse-drawn cart. More importantly, however, Miss Tooksie's relay of the past here is quite unperturbed as she is in no way stressing that the Caymanian past must be remembered for posterity. Indeed, her thoughtful and positive recall in 1991 evinces a positive attitude of her past; these expressed feelings thus have potential traditional value for the fact that Miss Tooksie has orally expressed a practice that occurred in the Caymanian past; this expressiveness has in turn been immortalized by way of the transcription process, and therefore can be passed on to younger Caymanians who are especially keen to understand and cherish this aspect of their ancestral past.

As a point of clarification, when I speak of *attitude* in this instance, I am referring to the line of thought that attitudes may '...represent an evaluative response towards

¹⁷ Interview with Adinah Whittaker, pp.7-8.

an object.’¹⁸ The object of Miss Tooksie’s focus is her memory of walking long distances to school regardless of the weather. That she responds to this object with a lingering sense of pride and excitement, we may evaluate her response as a traditionally favourable one: in other words, her expression has in effect established a groundwork upon which similar expressions of the Caymanian past can be built, and hints at the idea that, barring any great traumatic incident, the past can be relayed in nostalgic terms.¹⁹ We should at this juncture begin to anticipate the great extent to which Miss Tooksie’s recollection would resonate with other Caymanians who are at present also keen to remember either their lived or ancestral past in the attempt to keep it alive in the midst of a rampant multiculturalism. Yet it is also my contention that a resonation of this nature introduces the idea of traditional Caymanian sentiment as vibrant image.

My idea of Miss Tooksie as traditional imager need not be limited to her, but can constantly be perpetuated and built upon by other Caymanians with past lived experiences. Despite any and all of their spoken inaccuracies with regard to the retelling of the past, the words of such Caymanians possess the potential both to establish and buttress a nostalgic appreciation for the past. Especially in the present day, this nostalgic appreciation indeed reserves the unique ability to create a

¹⁸ Gerd Bohner *et al.*, *Attitudes and Attitude Change* (Essex: Psychology Press Ltd., 2002), p.5.

¹⁹ Svetlana Boym, *The Future of Nostalgia* (New York: Basic Books, 2001), chapter 4.

powerful emotional pull back to that past.²⁰ Thus the emotional power which can accompany recounts of the past, via memory, can be secured in imaginative terms; this is conveyed in the idea that the past as mental image can depend on the apposite senses if it is to be fully experienced in hindsight. Although the concept of visualization suggests the superseding sense of sight, any traditional visualization of the past necessarily transcends this limited sense.²¹ Thus traditional visualizations require a sensorial network that works to capture Caymanian understandings of the underlying character, or spirit, of that past episode. Indeed, the underlying spirit of Miss Tooksie's foregoing recollection – which, it should be stressed represents my own ideas of the nature of this spirit of the past – can be decoded by the essential image that her words are likely to evoke. When, for instance, she talks about walking long distances to school in any weather, her recollection works to establish a vivid image of the actualities of that past event. Thus it was not very difficult for me, as a Caymanian, to imagine a group of children running three miles to school in the rain, laughing and ostensibly carefree in their unassuming plight.²² Miss Tooksie's exclamation at the actuality of having to run to school during inclement weather adds a marked auditory and visual accent, cementing the importance of vibrant expression to effective relays of the past. As I continued to visualize Miss Tooksie's recount of this part of her past, her imagery gathered further emotional power in its

²⁰ Stephanie Coontz, *The Way We Were: American Families and the Nostalgia Trap* (New York: Basic Books, 1992), p.8.

²¹ See Kenneth Baum, *The Mental Edge* (New York: Berkley Publishing Group, 1999), p.88

²² Cf. Appendix C.

ability to elevate the appropriate senses: the imaginary senses of touch, smell, sight, and hearing contribute to her account; the fecund smells which accompany rain or sunshine, the visual effect of the rain or the sun as these foreground the sounds of the open air – chirping birds, the hum of the surf (as Bodden Town is situated right along Grand Cayman’s southern coast); the perceived taste of the atmosphere on the tongue.

Similarly, the following excerpt from the pro-Caymanian newspaper, the *Caymanian Compass*, imaginatively captures the perceived spirit behind the traditional use of the Cayman silver thatch palm. The Cayman silver thatch palm is unique only to the Cayman Islands and was used in historical Cayman society to make various products like the sturdy thatch rope (which was especially used by Caymanian seaman and traded at Jamaican ports), slippers known as wompers, baskets, brooms, and so forth. The silver thatch palm was also an indispensable feature of old Caymanian houses, used both as roofing and walling.²³ Based on its historical importance, the *Compass’s* account of this once valuable staple is immediately vivid in its descriptions:

Teams of eight to 10 men would work together to thatch a house roof, usually in exchange for a meal and help when their own homes needed re-thatching.

²³ See, for instance, Rose Ebanks, ‘History’s silver thread’, in *Cayman Net News*, at <http://www.caymannetnews.com/cgi-script/csArticles/articles/000070/007013.htm>, October 14, 2006; March 23, 2010.

Using open leaves, the thatchers had to work quickly as the leaves would curl if left to dry and cause the roof to leak.

The supervising thatcher would work from inside the house. If you look carefully at a thatched roof, you will appreciate the skill involved in creating this closely constructed covering that can be best observed (and guided) from the underside.²⁴

This evocation of the past has the ability to generate an image in the present that privileges an important Caymanian tradition: the evoked image of this utterance is steeped in a sense of community and imaginatively crystallized in tactility and vision – the feel of the palm beneath labouring hands and its visual representation upon the completion of the roof; the very vibrancy of this image works to establish the art of thatching as distinctly Caymanian. This account thus can demonstrate by imaginary touch and vision how an occupation and its attendant homegrown skills substantively contributed to a Caymanian way of life. Such evocations can readily capture a state of being in the traditional imagination, and the much perceived potency of the past thus can gain its strength from the implied imagery that undergirds favourable expressions of it. In this sense, effective traditional expressions do not always need to stress the importance that fading traditions be remembered and practiced in the present; instead, the accounts of Miss Tooksie and the *Compass* editor are necessarily traditional because these Caymanians are, in effect, orally transmitting information about the past, if with a marked tranquility;

²⁴ Editor, 'Silver Thatch important to heritage', in the *Caymanian Compass*, at <http://www.caycompass.com/cgi-bin/CFPnews.cgi?ID=1028750>, February 24, 2008; January 12, 2010.

such simple yet potent relays of the past, as we will further see, not only represent evocations on which younger Caymanians can relate to, and associate with, in their quest to cherish the ways of their ancestors, but by virtue of the images which they can evoke, begin to establish a Caymanian spirit rooted not so much in an objective history, but in positive traditionalist interpretations of that history. According to my own understandings of the two accounts I have so far used, the Caymanian spirit captured is shaped in a ubiquitous, unspoken hardship; it is this hardship, in all of its unspoken potency, which gives traditional Caymanian thought its equally unspoken adapting values. Within these traditional sentiments rests the idea that the historically bound Caymanian spirit of the children of Miss Tooksie's childhood and the Caymanian roof thatchers is ultimately revealed in their ability, as liveries of the past, to subsume any ubiquitous hardship within mental structures of elation and skillful determination, respectively. Indeed, this speaks, in general terms, to the ancestral Caymanians' ability to positively adapt to hardship, both in emotional and occupational terms, and any immaterial Caymanian nature has indeed been effectively immortalized in these terms. We can at this point thus understand Miss Tooksie's and the *Compass's* recollections not only as indices of traditional sentiment, but they also, in my opinion, can serve as image-laden complements to other traditional sentiments more conscious in their awareness of the loss of tradition in the present.

Consider, for instance, sentiments that are concerned with Caymanian food and its dilution in the present day. 'Where has our cornbread gone?' begins Olga Adams, who grew up in the Cayman Islands in the 1930s and 1940s: '[t]hat old Caymanian favorite has vanished from restaurant tables and takeaway plates. Not so long ago, a Caymanian meal always included some kind of cornbread, either pan style or custard top cornbread, that unique Caymanian creation which is served cold and considered a side dish, not dessert. Not anymore.'²⁵ Clearly having assumed the role of traditionalist – as the term here denotes a person who is stressing the loss of some aspect of tradition and calling for its recovery – Mrs. Adams goes on to say, '[w]ill future generations of Caymanians grow up never tasting warm sweet Caymanian cornbread made from Grandma's special recipe?''²⁶ The same sentiment could, by proxy, be applied to the unofficial Caymanian heavy cake desert, a pudding made from cassava;²⁷ or Cayman rundown, a stew which consists of vegetables and meat. Other Caymanian traditional foods quickly approaching commercial extinction include conch fritters, Cayman-style beef and fish, stew turtle, etc. Thus in her lamentation of the loss of "old-time" Cayman food, it is my contention that Mrs.

²⁵ Olga Adams, 'What happened to our Caymanian cornbread?', in *Cayman Net News*, at <http://www.caymannetnews.com/cgi-script/csArticles/articles/000151/015181.htm>, June 1, 2007; January 20, 2010.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ For the actual ingredients that go into making Cayman heavy cake, see, for instance, Anonymous, 'Heavy Cake: Cayman's cherished "National Dessert"', in *Cayman Net News*, at http://www.caymannetnews.com/lifestyle.php?news_id=2650&start=0&category_id=6, October 12, 2007; January 20, 2010.

Adams implicitly relies on a unique Caymanian culinary taste, and it is this reliance that furnishes her traditional understanding its historical worth.

The sentiment behind the revival of the old Caymanian tradition of blowing the conch horn can be interpreted in a similar way. Deal Ebanks remembers the important uses that the conch horn played in traditional Cayman society:

The fishermen would come in and need help putting up the boats, so they would blow the conch shell...Each fisherman would have his own style of blowing the horn to let his people know that he was on his way in. The fishermen would also use the horn to indicate which type of fish they had caught. They would have a different blow for a different type of fish.²⁸

Mr. Ebanks can be placed in the same category as Mrs. Adams for his belief that ‘...it is very important for traditions such as conch horn blowing to be passed down to the younger generation.’ Mr. Ebanks’s fear that this tradition will be forever lost in the present is powerfully contextualized when he was awakened one afternoon to his son, Deal Jr., competently blowing the conch horn, something which brought tears to his eyes, when, no doubt, he realized that at least his son would endeavour to carry on this tradition.²⁹

²⁸ Eugene Bonthuys, ‘Waking to an old tradition’, in the *Caymanian Compass*, at <http://www.caycompass.com/cgi-bin/CFPnews.cgi?ID=10385828>, September 28, 2009; January 20, 2010.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

Mr. Ebanks's emotional recount conforms to my hermeneutic that is inclined to confirm that any traditional sentiment necessarily evokes an image in its attempt to situate – whether consciously, subconsciously, or personally – the importance of the past in the present. In keeping with my own understanding of the imaginary underpinnings of traditional memory, Mr. Ebanks's account can and do rely on the apposite senses; his expressive descriptions of the conch horn create a traditional trope that marks this instrument as distinctly Caymanian: it is as if these descriptions achieve their superlative essence not through the literality of their words, but upon the Caymanian essence that these words invoke, an essence that possesses the ability to imaginatively stimulate the auditory and visual senses. Indeed, as a younger Caymanian keen to cherish and remember my past, I can readily imagine the conch horn being blown either in inclement weather, as a way to indicate to those on land the position of the incoming fisherman; or, in any kind of weather, indicating the type of fish caught in the day in question. Like Miss Tooksie's recount of the past – a recount which does not stress the importance of the perpetuation of tradition – Mr. Ebanks's emotional stress that the traditional uses of the conch horn must not be lost, provides further legitimacy to an image grounded in historical circumstance and perpetuated by vivid expressive recalls.

The sentiments of Mr. Ebanks and Mrs. Adams work more directly to confirm the past and its potential loss than Miss Tooksie's recollection. We may say that Miss

Tooksie's contribution to the Caymanian traditional imagination is indirect; in other words, her recollections perpetuate the past as memory and not, like Mrs. Adams' and Mr. Ebanks's equivalents, according to the imperative to recover tradition practices of the past. In light of this comparison, Miss Tooksie's remembrance secures its perpetuity in the fact that the mere act of remembering is itself an entrenched tradition:³⁰ indeed, every time the lived past is remembered, this opens up avenues into perceptions and understandings of that past, thereby providing the vital means by which traditions can be transmitted to younger Caymanian generations.

In contrast, Mr. Ebanks's expressions are underpinned by the belief that it is important that certain traditional practices be continued in the present.³¹ Olga betrays a similar sentiment with a plaintive sense underlying her viewpoint that Cayman cornbread does not feature in present-day Cayman cuisine as prominently as it once did. In fact, in these viewpoints, rests the powerful inference that history *should* repeat itself, and not with the negative repetition of which Irish playwright George Bernard Shaw spoke, when he asserted that '[i]f history repeats itself...how incapable man must be of learning from experience.'³² The foregoing quote does not express (as perhaps was its intent) that traditional practices considered to be

³⁰ Cf. Edward, S. Casey, *Remembering: A Phenomenological Study* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000, 2nd edition), chapter 1.

³¹ See footnote 28.

³² Quoted in M. David Chambers, *Perpetuity* (Indianapolis: Dogear Publishing, Co, Ltd., 2008), p.17.

important and positive to any nationality *should* be repeated if they are to remain alive for posterity; the implication here is that if we choose to forget the past then traditions perceived to be important will also necessarily fade away into extinction.³³

Thus Mr. Ebanks's and Mrs. Adams's traditionalist sentiments, more so than Miss Tooksie's and the editor of the *Compass*, possess a greater sense of cultural urgency. By stressing the importance that traditional practices and items be consciously and practically perpetuated, Mr. Ebanks and Mrs. Adams can be understood as culturally aware beings mindful of the present crisis of multiculturalism which, in its celebration of the peaceful coexistence of cultures, has worked to eclipse Caymanian traditions (we look at the perceived disruptive effects of multiculturalism in section 4.2.). An awareness of this perspective in turn leads to a constant cultural re-evaluation of the Caymanian self in traditional terms.

The following analysis has demonstrated that Caymanian traditional sentiment can either be lamenting or tranquil in its portrayal and embrace of the past. I have also shown that both types of sentiment can be very vivid in their recalls of the past, something which speaks to the primacy of the traditional imagination. Thus we should now ask ourselves, what is the possible subjective underpinning of a vivid Caymanian traditional imagination indebted to either of these portrayals?

³³ Kirk Simpson, *Unionist Voices and the Politics of Remembering the Past in Northern Ireland* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), p.2.

Striving to understand the ways in which Caymanian traditions can be passed down to younger Caymanian generations, we should remain aware that the act of verbal perpetuation – that is, ensuring that traditional thought continues indefinitely – is highly subjective. When I speak of subjectivity, I am thinking of a simple question asked by almost everyone, almost all the time – that is, *who am I?*³⁴ We can choose to further understand this question in two ways here; either as extending to what Rene Descartes understood as a sense of crisis – be it a crisis of traditional, social, and cultural proportions – which in turn precipitates the self to constantly re-evaluate and question its purpose and function;³⁵ or, as references to traditional practices and languages that come as a result either of experience or nurtured social understandings.³⁶ The recent recollection of Miss Tooksie is without any sense of crisis and therefore her understandings of who she is are essentially framed in the traditional idea of who she *was* while growing up. Simply put, Miss Tooksie's recollection of the past emanates from within her and is based on her lived experiences and she is simply confirming – in effect *answering* – the effects of the past on her traditional self. Similarly, although the newspaper editor's traditional sentiment sets the tone for any further understanding that a distinct Caymanian way of old – thatching – has become a relatively unimportant feature at present, his

³⁴ Donald Hall, *Subjectivity* (New York: Routledge, 2004), pp.1-6.

³⁵ Rene Descartes, *Mediations and Other Metaphysical Writings*, translated by Desmond Clarke (London: Penguin Books, 1998), chapter 1.

³⁶ Nick Mansfield, *Theories of Self from Freud to Haraway* (New York: New York University Press, 2000), p.14.

sentiments are ultimately unperturbed in that he is simply stating how life was in Cayman at one point in history. Both accounts of the past fall under the second definition of subjectivity, that is, both Miss Tooksie and the newspaper editor are, in some way, referring to a traditional way of life which, in tranquil tones, begins to establish ideas of the historical traditional Caymanian self without relying on a language of lamentation and/or recovery.

Conversely, Mrs. Adams's and Mr. Ebanks's subjectivity, while rooted in history, reveals a potential crisis of the traditional Caymanian self. According to the idea that certain traditions underpinned a historical Caymanian way of life, a sense of cultural crisis is attached to the virtual disappearance of these traditions from the present-day cultural landscape. It is this sense of cultural crisis that gives more urgent recalls of the past their imperative to stress the necessity that more effort be invested in the perpetuation of Caymanian traditions. At this point in the argument, the cultural urgency that drives these traditional understandings of the Caymanian self is revealed. Mrs. Adams and Mr. Ebanks could not have spoken with such conviction if they did not truly feel that their traditions were being eroded to the point of extinction, something which only their own experiences of those traditions could ultimately reveal. With the foregoing frame of reference in mind, the assessment that follows focuses on the ways in which traditional sentiments more sedate and unperturbed in nature can be reappropriated into positive, *concerned*, aware ones,

away from any xenophobic considerations; any such reappropriation here occurs largely in the name of generational perpetuity.

The fact that traditions are passed from one generation to another is, for instance, crystallized in the traditional sentiments of young established Caymanian Natasha Kozaily. A musician and painter, Mrs. Kozaily was able to spend an afternoon in 2009 with an older popular Caymanian woman and musician by the name of Julia Hydes, affectionately known as Miss Julia. Miss Julia is a prolific Caymanian musician who contributed to Cayman kitchen music. Cayman Kitchen music was an enduring feature of Cayman's sixth historical phase, deriving its name from the fact that many Caymanian musicians could not afford real musical instruments 'and [thus] would find something to play from the kitchen such as a grater, bottles, maracas made from coconut shells or a calabash; anything to make a rhythm.'³⁷ Miss Julia was a popular kitchen musician drummer and singer by the 1930s, becoming well known for her creation of sea shanties like 'Munzie's boat' and 'You have to wait till my ship comes in', and ballads like 'Cardile gone to Cuba'.³⁸ Her traditional songs underpin the perception of an adaptive Caymanian spirit of which I recently spoke, illuminating such themes as coping in hardship and spousal loneliness – especially for the wives of Cayman seaman who were away. She also employs apt

³⁷ See *Cayman Net News*, 'Rediscovering the soul of Cayman', in *Cayman Net News*, at <http://www.caymannetnews.com/cgi-script/csArticles/articles/000062/006241.htm>, September 23, 2006; September 16, 2010.

³⁸ CINA, *Our Islands' Past: Volume III: Traditional Songs From the Cayman Islands* (George Town: CINA and Cayman Free Press, 1996), pp.2-19.

nautical humour in some of her songs, expressed for instance in 'You have to wait till my ship comes in':

You have to wait till my ship comes in,
My ship comes in, my ship comes in,
You have to wait till my ship comes in,
And then I'll have money to spend.³⁹

Although Miss Julia's recollection of the past is here ultimately mediated through Mrs. Kozaily, like Miss Tooksie's own professed attitudes, Miss Julia's attitude of her past, as understood by Mrs. Kozaily, is favourable, although she does not seem to be precisely lamenting the loss of tradition; as will be seen, it is Mrs. Kozaily who is doing this. The cultural mediation which occurs between Mrs. Kozaily and Miss Julia and her past, from the outset, begins to confirm a dynamic perpetuity of traditional thought between older and younger Caymanians, if in not so deterministic a way. In other words, this cultural exchange, as we will see, is not essentially premised on the effort of an older Caymanian to recollect her past, but on the younger Caymanian seeking to understand the traditions of her ancestor through proactive means. As a young Caymanian more acquainted with the modern and prosperous Caymanian lifestyle, Mrs. Kozaily has, in this instance, become the unlikely pursuer of traditional honour. It is especially worth quoting her honour of

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p.19.

her Caymanian ancestor at length for it reveals the psychological nub of her ancestral connection:

Later, as I reflected on my afternoon with Miss Julia, I mused about the things she had said. I thought about the great changes she has witnessed over the past 100 years, from the days of smoke pots and kitchen dances to the present age of commercial banking and tourism; and I can't help but wonder: Have we have lost our identity in the process? They used to say that Cayman was the island that time forgot. Now it seems that time is what we have too little of. There is little time to preserve our national treasures and our God-given paradise. There is little time to make the next generation, who are the only hope for the future, the centre of our concern and care. There is little time to capture the good things of the past, the spirit of community and pass them unto our families, neighbourhoods and districts. The days of kitchen dances and weekend gatherings at a neighbour's should not be lost in the pages of our history books. The music of our Islands should be passed unto our children and not forgotten or drowned in the Top 40 playlist. I can only hope that we, as Caymanians, don't let our traditions fade away with time. After all, we need to know where we're from to know where we're going. I hope that the young will learn from the old, because they have a lot to teach us. And I hope that we can not only come together and treasure our Islands, our heritage, and our music, but keep it alive...because there is little time.⁴⁰

Mrs. Kozaily then goes on to provide a more intimate traditional connection between Miss Julia and her music when she was growing up in Grand Cayman in the early decades of the twentieth century:

⁴⁰ Natasha Kozaily, 'Afternoon with Miss Julia', in the *Caymanian Compass*, at <http://www.caycompass.com/cgi-bin/CFPnews.cgi?ID=10388064>, December 20, 2009; January 12, 2010.

She [Miss Julia] told us how she would go from district to district and house to house with the fiddler, Mr. Radley Gourzong. She described the dances and the atmosphere, putting us all on the edge of our seats with her vivid descriptions and her infectious enthusiasm. She explained the lyrics of her songs and how she came about writing the song "Munzie's Boat" and others. And then she started to sing one of my favourites "Cardile gone to Cuba". As she sang for us she clapped rhythms in between the phrases as if she had an invisible drum in her hands.

She was enchanting.⁴¹

By honoring the old Caymanian musical way of life and Miss Julia's indispensable position in it, Mrs. Kozaily is acknowledging a Caymanian cultural continuum based on age and experience; it seems likely that in Mrs. Kozaily's mind, Miss Julia has assumed the position of the pioneering Caymanian ancestor while she, Mrs. Kozaily, by virtue of being an established Caymanian, assumes the role of cultural recipient. For Mrs. Kozaily, the past-present connection here is a natural, God-given one, especially in light of her reflection that the heritage of Caymanian music be kept alive; the idea here is that the cultural connection between the past and the present should be a seamless one dependent on the perpetuation of sentimental traditional expressions.

Although her main concern is Caymanian kitchen music, Mrs. Kozaily links the naturalness of tradition with the idea of community: Caymanian music brought

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

people together, and it is largely on that basis that Caymanians in the present should strive to keep this aspect of their heritage alive. Indeed, as a traditionalist, Mrs. Kozaily has begun to answer the question, *who am I as a Caymanian?* She is a Caymanian with a vibrant ancestral past; her subjectivity gives potency to the idea that the efficacy of traditional thought, its very perpetual legitimacy, can only stem from the past; this speaks forcefully to the idea that if a traditional act is to be perpetuated then its perpetuation depends on a reaction.⁴² Thus in her provision of an expressive and honourable response – or reaction – to Miss Julia and her recollections, Mrs. Kozaily has immortalized and activated Miss Julia’s unperturbed account of her own past. Miss Julia’s participation here is necessarily passive in one important way: that her recollections of the past are being mediated by Mrs. Kozaily, Mrs. Kozaily’s role in this mediation is more active by virtue of the latter’s proactive “reaction” to Miss Julia’s historical accomplishments; Miss Julia on the other hand, is not ultimately speaking for herself which makes her role here decidedly passive, together with the fact that when Mrs. Kozaily does relate to something that Miss Julia said or did, we notice that Miss Julia’s relayed sentiments are expressively represented without any component of lamentation. We should here strive not only to understand Mrs. Kozaily’s evoked past-present continuum in mere linear past-present terms, but as a superlative sentimental means by which younger

⁴² Cf. Oliver Jobson, *Expanding the Boundaries of Self: Beyond the Limit of Traditional Thought, Discovering the Magic Within* (Fort Lauderdale: Global Publishing Associates, Inc., 2005), part 1.

Caymanians especially can legitimize their ancestral past via established traditional sentiment.⁴³

By relying on the traditional sentiments of the likes of Miss Julia, Mrs. Kozaily's subjectivity exhibits her ideology of Caymanianness; Caymanianness prompts the uniquely subjective query, *who am I as a Caymanian?* As Caymanian ancestors, Miss Tooksie and Miss Julia provide the initial answer to this fundamentally ideological question which is influenced by historical experiences: based on their lived past experiences, these "true," or established, Caymanians are understood as having their roots in the Caymanian past. It is worth returning to young Caymanian Quincy Brown's understanding of the historicity of the native Caymanian touched upon in this section's introduction: 'Let us never forget from whence we came. We were poor; our fathers and grandfathers...were emulous and hard working.'⁴⁴ Similarly, the Minister of Health and Human Services in 2008, The Honourable Anthony Eden, contextualizes the importance of remembering the beleaguered past as it provides the prosperous Caymanian present its historical grounding: 'We often overlook the fact that it was through our elders' diligent planning, that today we can boast of Cayman's success as an off-shore banking centre. The foundation they built years ago continues to sustain us today. In no small measure do we owe our current

⁴³ Cf. Johannes Birringer, *Performance on the Edge: Transformations of Culture* (London: Athlone Press, 2000), p.29.

⁴⁴ Quincy Brown, 'Don't sell out, Cayman', in the *Caymanian Compass*, at <http://www.caycompass.com/cgi-bin/CFPnews.cgi?ID=1010438>, January 18, 2008; January 8, 2009.

lifestyles to them.’⁴⁵ Indeed, Joseph Pieper has posed the question as to whether traditional thought is anti-historical given its idealistic understandings of history (I define idealism just below).⁴⁶ Despite the potential truth that traditional thought may indeed be anti-historical in this light, what is more important here is the way in which Mr. Brown, Mr. Eden, and Mrs. Kozaily, as younger Caymanians, are affirming the initial answer of Caymanianness through their honour of the Caymanian ancestor.

Towards the continued effort to provide a satisfactory answer to the question posed by the concept of Caymanianness, we should here be mindful that although the recollections of Miss Julia and Miss Tooksie are on different aspects of Caymanian history, their recollections, in aggregate, provide a historical grounding for a distinct traditional Caymanian outlook. Thus, in my view, Miss Tooksie’s sentiments are underpinned by the unassuming economic situation of her childhood days, while we are able to locate Miss Julia’s mediated traditional sentiments in a line of thought that privileges Caymanian music culture; both sentiments return to the same line of thought, that of favourable subjective understandings of a past shaped in hardship. However, can I really say that the recollections of Miss Tooksie and Miss Julia have really combined towards a historical traditional grounding when we are dealing

⁴⁵ Anthony S. Eden, ‘Show older Caymanians respect’, in the *Caymanian Compass*, at <http://www.caycompass.com/cgi-bin/CFPnews.cgi?ID=1034011>, September 30, 2008; January 8, 2009.

⁴⁶ Joseph Pieper, *Tradition: Concept and Claim*, translated by E. Christian Kopff (Wilmington: ISI Press, 2008), chapter 1.

with subjective understandings of the past that run the risk of being solipsistic? Frederick Beiser expresses that subjectivism represents 'the doctrine that the subject has an immediate knowledge only of its own ideas, so that it has no knowledge beyond the circle of its consciousness.'⁴⁷ Beiser continues that subjective understandings can be saturated with solipsistic overtones, the idea that as the past is being remembered it is being remembered within a subconscious mental frame of personal inclusivity:⁴⁸ in other words, in remembering and recounting their lived pasts, are Miss Tooksie and Miss Julia subjectively viewing their past, not necessarily as members of a community, but in the sole terms of me-ness? That is, who was *I* as a Caymanian? As opposed to who were *we* as Caymanians? Are they recounting aspects of their lived past with the understanding that other Caymanians their age would have constituted that past, or has the past in effect become for them *my* past and *my* existence in this past?

Before we can answer these questions, I suggest that traditional accounts of the past are necessarily, in my opinion, idealistic: in other words, although these accounts detail the past, they are not fundamentally dependent on the actual past but the ways in which the mind, via ideas, is selectively remembering the lived past in the

⁴⁷ Frederick Beiser, *German Idealism: The Struggle against Subjectivism, 1781-1801* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 2002), p.1.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p.28.

present.⁴⁹ I am aware that there is a potential discrepancy here, for anyone theoretically inclined to the concept of realism would be likely to disagree with my understandings here on the grounds that the foregoing accounts should be interpreted as expressions of the true nature of the Caymanian past outside of any mental, ideational awareness;⁵⁰ yet how else can we explain such human experiences other than through our mental and emotional understandings of them? Do not our thoughts and actions create experiences where before there were none? Thus in my view, given that we cannot essentially distinguish memories from their “natural” corresponding experiences, like Marcel Proust, I am keen to accentuate the ways in which the mind remembers the past.⁵¹

Thus as traditional idealists, Miss Tooksie’s and Miss Julia’s perceptions of the past, together with their ostensibly tranquil oral transmission of these perceptions, empowers and legitimates this past for other traditional-minded Caymanians, even if this was not their intent. Relying on this empowerment to temper my arguments here, I am inclined to agree with the idea that Miss Tooksie and Miss Julia (through the mediation of Natasha) could not have been recounting the past in mere terms of me-ness, but Caymanianness, where the idea of Caymanianness begins to confirm

⁴⁹ For a definition of idealism, see *The Compact Edition of the Oxford Dictionary (Second Edition)* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), p. 810 [p.616].

⁵⁰ See the definition for realism in *Ibid.*, p. 1519 [p.275]; see also Michael Devitt, *Realism and Truth* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996, 2nd edition), introduction.

⁵¹ See, in its entirety, Marcel Proust, *Swann’s Way (Remembrance of Things Past, Volume One)*, translated by C.K. Moncrieff (digireads.com: Digireads.com Publishing, 2009).

what it meant to be a Caymanian; these older Caymanians are in the process of establishing unassuming historical actualities of many – if not most – Caymanians.⁵² For instance, the unassuming actuality of walking to wherever one had to go resonates in Miss Tooksie's account; and when we add Miss Julia's mediated understandings of the past that expressed the ability of Cayman kitchen music to draw Caymanian people together, at least in a listening capacity, we begin to realize the likelihood of just how typical the experiences of these ladies were. In this sense, both women are wittingly or unwittingly confirming certain aspects of life for a great deal of Caymanians to the 1960s, thereby delineating the historical differences between, say, Caymanianness and Caribbeanness.

Mimi Sheller recognizes the importance of national difference in the Caribbean context given the indispensable force of globalisation throughout this region at present. However, she sees Caribbeanness – the state of being culturally Caribbean – as symptomatic of the prototypic forces of globalisation: in other words, West Indian people possess the culture that they do because of the historical-cultural mix between Amerindian, European, and African.⁵³ Yet the idea of Caribbeanness, and more importantly Caymanianness, deserves a more specific explanation given that despite an initial cultural mixing, Caribbean islands and their peoples developed

⁵² For further understandings of this potential nationalness of which I speak, see, for instance, Paul Ward, *Britishness Since 1870* (London: Routledge, 2004).

⁵³ See Mimi Sheller, *Consuming the Caribbean: From Arawaks to Zombies* (London: Routledge [Taylor & Francis e-library edition], 2003), part 1.

their own internal and local histories, indeed their own sense of community. Like Britishness, Caribbeanness has a dual nature. Many persons of English, Irish, Scottish, and Welsh descent have embraced what Andrew Gambale *et al.* have referred to as their primary national identities first, assuming the designation of Britishness as a secondary or subordinate identity.⁵⁴ In a similar way, people from the Caribbean have primary national identities – whether they are Grenadians, Dominicans, or Trinidadians – and are likely to assume the blanketing Caribbean identity only after the initial fact of their primary nationality. Given the localised primacy of any national identity, despite any social and cultural similarities among Caribbean islands, we begin to realize that we cannot, for instance, deny the sense of communal Caymanianness present in Miss Tooksie's expressions that she had to walk with a group of children to school in any weather; or, Miss Julia's mediated traditional reflection that she and fiddler Radley Gourzong went from district to district to play music for their fellow Caymanians. In these accounts, community refers to a society in which relationships are premised not so much on any political relationship between the state and its people but on bonds of sociality and commonality shared horizontally between the people and which reveal mutual ideas of belonging.⁵⁵

⁵⁴ See Frank Gambale *et al.*, 'Introduction: The British-ness Question', in *British-ness: Perspectives on the British-ness Question*, edited by Frank Gambale *et al.* (West Essex: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), pp.1-10

⁵⁵ Gerrard Delanty, *Community* (London: Routledge, 2003), chapter 1.

A sense of community among nationals usually precedes nationalistic thought.⁵⁶ This understanding necessarily illuminates the ideological concept of communitarianism, which informs the ways in which a sense of community – and not individuality – can meaningfully create a moral and political vision of the nation or state in question.⁵⁷ We should keep in mind that communitarianism need not be considered here as authoritative in a Marxist sense, neither does it have to be restricted to an actual, physical community in perpetuity. Conversely, I choose to see a Caymanian traditionally bound communitarianism as playing out in the minds of traditionalist Caymanians their traditional vision – away from capitalist and liberalist considerations – that is engendered by their historically derived socialising sense. A national's traditional sentiment plays an indispensable role in this vision as it provides a decidedly mental communitarianism its historical-traditional basis. Thus in light of this communitarian concept, Miss Tooksie and Miss Julia have inherited the vanguard position of the ancestral Caymanian keen to pass on knowledge of the Caymanian past, while providing the inspiration for younger Caymanians keen on keeping the past alive.

⁵⁶ See, for instance, Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 2006), chapter 3.

⁵⁷ See Michael Sandel, 'The Procedural Republic and the Unencumbered Self', in *Communitarianism and Individualism*, edited by Schlomo Avineri and Avner de-Shalit (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), pp. 12-28; David Miller, 'Community and Citizenship', in *Communitarianism and Individualism*, pp.85-100.

Indeed, these vanguards of a Caymanian traditional communitarianism establish communal ideas on which any subsequent traditional thought can be built. There is something decidedly communal about a group of children happily walking or running to school, or two Caymanian musicians traveling the island to play music for their fellow countrymen. When situated in the gaze of professional historiography, these acts often run the risk of being overlooked; on their own, they cannot drive historical narratives centered on the political, economic, or social conditions in question. They may contribute to perceptions of the social workings of the society at that historical time, but such acts are ultimately subordinated to those wider concerns striving to verify larger, “objective” aspects of history. Yet, the recollections of Miss Toonsie and Miss Julia are not seeking to confirm historiography but to present an intimate knowledge of the communal essence of their past, an intention that automatically works towards the former confirmation. With lived experience as their muse, these ladies are relaying vibrant aspects of their histories in personal and descriptive terms; they are, in effect, confirming history not in verifiable terms, but in personal, subjective ones. The traditional utterings of these ladies and other older Caymanians begin to confirm both the traditional specificity of historical Caymanianness and establish the idea of a historically derived “honest” outlook rooted not so much in the objective past but in traditional, indeed selective, promotions of the past.

In conclusion, and in light of the above assessment of the importance of recollections of the lived past as sustainers of a traditional cultural imagination based on communitarianism, we should be mindful of the line of thought that members in modern societies with a strong sense of tradition should not be viewed '[as the] members of "old and cold" societies [who] blindly [follow] traditional norms beliefs and practices, making all action and routine action and thus giving no quarter to reflexive deliberation.'⁵⁸ Indeed, there is nothing "old and cold," and static, for that matter, about Miss Tooksie's recount of walking miles to school in rain or shine, or in Miss Julia's musical rendition: in the present these evoke a strong sense of tradition that, among other things, work to privilege an ancestral way of life in the midst of a present way of life in which traditions risk total erasure. Neither should we subscribe to the belief that the likes of Mr. Brown and Mrs. Kozaily, for instance, are blindly following the norms and opinions of their Caymanian ancestors; they are certainly remembering the past but given Mr. Brown's sober remembrance of the past and Mrs. Kozaily's nostalgic elation of Miss Julia's traditional enthusiasm, these younger Caymanians are behaving more as patriotic Caymanians than overzealous and xenophobic traditionalists, where patriotism 'involves certain beliefs and feelings for one's [ancestral past]';⁵⁹ Mr. Brown and Mrs. Kozaily believe in the legitimating force of their past and its

⁵⁸ Margaret Archer, *Making Our Way through the World: Human Reflexivity and Social Mobility* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), p.26.

⁵⁹ Igor Primoratz, 'Introduction', in *Patriotism*, edited by Igor Primoratz (New York: Prometheus Books, 2002), p.10.

sustaining traditional expressions, and this belief substantively informs their love of being Caymanian. The cultural utterances of Mr. Brown and Mrs. Kozaily begin to establish a cultural link between the past and the present, between the self, its ancestral self, and the social context of the latter. To be precise, both types of Caymanian – young and old – have also demonstrated their traditional awareness of Caymanianness, where any such traditional awareness denotes ‘a community of shared meanings’ among established, generational Caymanians.⁶⁰ In this sense, not only are Mrs. Kozaily, Mr. Brown, and Mr. Eden acknowledging their ancestry but it is precisely within this acknowledgement that they are expressing the historicity of themselves as established Caymanians. These younger Caymanians are creating a cultural story steeped both in a historical and prosaic context, where *the prosaic* denotes traditional thought expressed in words. If we view the written meditations of these younger Caymanians as literatures of a sort, and with noticeable historical overtones, we may say that the former are working within the process of New Historicism.

New Historicism is a literary technique to assess the past, and which depends on understanding the past not only through established historiography but also through other fictional or nonfictional writings about it. As Catherine Gallagher *et al.* confirm – relying on the ideas of prolific anthropologist Clifford Geertz – ‘[the

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p.25.

interpretive strategies of New Historicism provide] key means for understanding the complex systems and life patterns that anthropologists [have] studied.’⁶¹ The written expressions of Mr. Brown, Mrs. Kozaily, and Mr. Eden strive to perpetuate the traditions inherent in Miss Tooksie’s and Miss Julia’s lived experiences; Mrs. Kozaily takes this a step further by capturing Miss Julia’s past by speaking on her behalf. All three of these younger Caymanians are, in effect, using their own literatures as a way of understanding the past; beyond this, any historical context of these written expressions emanates from their nurtured understandings of their past, understandings that would have been reinforced by the traditional expressions of a grandmother, grandfather, great-aunt, etc. In Mr. Eden’s case, we cannot deny that his written expressions have a political component; as Minister of Health and Human Services in 2008, we suspect that he was trying to strike a populist chord with the Caymanian electorate, especially in light of the upcoming 2009 elections. However, this is precisely where Mr. Eden’s New Historicism amasses its potency, for his written expressions reflect a putative communal Caymanian idea of the importance of the past to the social and economic milieu of the multicultural present: in other words, the “real,” established Caymanian is distinguished from the incoming new, or paper Caymanian by virtue of history and historical circumstance.⁶² In this interpretive light, together with the written

⁶¹ Catherine Gallagher *et al.*, *Practicing New Historicism* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1997), p.21; see also Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973).

⁶² For a working definition of new Caymanian, see section 1, p.51.

expressions of Mr. Brown and Mrs. Kozaily, Mr. Eden's penned ideas are indirectly inspired by the recollections of the likes of Miss Tooksie and Miss Julia. Younger Caymanians who assume the role of New Historians seem to be not only establishing a cultural link with the past, via tradition, but are also solidifying a traditional image which by inference stresses that true Caymanianness must have its experiential and generational basis in the past. Thus Mr. Brown, Mr. Eden, Miss Tooksie, Mrs. Kozaily, and Miss Julia – and Mrs. Adams and Mr. Ebanks, for that matter – constitute a Caymanian community given their Caymanian nationality and the past-present determination of their traditional sentiment. With this in mind, the following subsection continues to interrogate the past-present determination of the Caymanian traditional imagination, but more so in terms of gender.

3.2.3 Gender, Emotion, and Perpetuity: The Importance of the Caymanian Seaman in the Caymanian Traditional Imagination

As the founder of traditional thought, the ancestral Caymanian, together with the historical-social conditions of his or her cultural formation, deserves more attention at this point. We should here anticipate that the socio-gendered hierarchy of phase six of Cayman's history would play an important role in the shaping of traditional Caymanian thought. Indeed, growing up in this phase, the likes of Miss Tooksie and Miss Julia would have been functioning within the social tone of the time, which, I contend, was specifically guided by considerations of gender (later explained),

which was in turn bound to directly or indirectly affect younger Caymanians years after the fact. My intentions in the assessments that follow are admittedly guided by traditional considerations of gender, considerations illuminated in Mr. Brown's and Mr. Jackson's understandings of the past in this section's first subsection; in brief, both Mr. Brown and Mr. Jackson spoke about the indispensability of the hardworking Caymanian male;⁶³ these Caymanian men, one elderly, the other in his late twenties, are indeed recalling a traditional Caymanian outlook in which men went to sea and women stayed at home. Caymanian Consuelo Ebanks illustrates that the understandings of Mr. Brown and Mr. Jackson are not restricted only to Caymanian males, asserting 'I can say without fair contradiction that these men [Caymanian seamen] laid the economic foundations for the prosperity that we enjoy today...'⁶⁴ So too does Velma Herod exhibit a distinctly gendered understanding when she notes: 'We never stop and think where we came from and how hard our mothers and grandmothers had to work to help build these islands up while the fathers and husbands risked their lives on the ocean.'⁶⁵ The Cayman Islands Seafarers' Association expresses a similar idea: 'On the minus side however, we had situations almost unheard of today where our families were forced to be separated for months, sometimes years at a time when our men went to sea and our women

⁶³ See section 3.1, pp. 132-133.

⁶⁴ See Nicola Kremer, 'A Chronicler of the Cayman Islands', in *Cayman Net News*, at <http://www.caymannetnews.com/Archive/Archive%20Articles/April%202003/Issue%20386%20Fri/A%20Chronicler%20-%20386.html,April>, 2003; February 19, 2010.

⁶⁵ Velma Herod, 'Letter: Caymanians get real', in *Cayman Net News*, at http://www.caymannetnews.com/article.php?news_id=15139, April 30, 2009; January 29, 2010.

stayed at home to play both the man and woman's role.'⁶⁶ Explicit in these expressions is the idea that women were forced to become the leaders of their society, while Caymanian seamen worked abroad for the former's economic and financial betterment.

Therefore, that it was understood that women stayed at home, I begin my analysis with female recollections of historical Caymanian society. It is my intention to show how such recollections help to establish the traditional masculine image of Caymanianness, as initially demonstrated in the idea that Caymanian men went to sea to provide for their families. The working thought here is that as Caymanian women remained at home, their dependence upon their Caymanian men, within a context of economic austerity, substantively contributed to the shaping of a traditional Caymanian value system based on ideas of the family, community, conservatism, and contentment. Although it is not the intention of this study to provide any in-depth assessment of a historically derived Caymanian value system, we should appreciate the enduring component of hard-working Caymanian seamen to the above ideas: indeed, not only would the actuality of going to sea for familial financial betterment contribute to a developing communal outlook, but the austere social circumstance that prompted this occupation would have also shaped ideas of economic conservatism and its attendant emotion of contentment. Therefore, in

⁶⁶ Cayman Island's Seafarers Association, 'He hath founded it upon the Seas', at http://www.caymannetnews.com/article.php?news_id=8856, July 25, 2008; February 19, 2010.

seeking to demonstrate the ways in which traditional ideas forged, literally, on Cayman soil can legitimate occupational actualities shaped from without in geographical displacement, I ultimately attempt to link Constance Bodden's experiences of living in historical Cayman with elevated ideas of a displaced yet vital Caymanian masculinity. However, before I can do this, it is crucial that I look at how Mrs. Bodden, as a Caymanian woman, initially sets the tone for any traditional idea of home and belonging, an idea upon which the legitimacy of the Caymanian seaman can be built.

Mrs. Bodden was born in West Bay, Grand Cayman on May 14, 1916, to Emmaline and Henry Hydes, themselves long-established Caymanians. At the age of 22, she married an American man whom she refers to simply as Don, and in 1938 they moved to the United States. Yet when asked by the interviewer if she was excited about going to the United States or homesick for Cayman, Mrs. Bodden's response, in the initial analysis, begins to confirm a traditional rootedness in the concept of home:

I was homesick, but I had to come 'cause Don said I shouldn't go back home and I must come. And when I got here [the United States] I seen it real hard because I didn't have any [friends] to meet [me]. Not like how when the rest of them [Americans returning home] came in, [and] always had somebody to meet 'em and I was the first one in my category.⁶⁷

⁶⁷ CINA, Interview with Constance Bodden, July 13, 1999, p.6.

Let us briefly question the possible extent of Mrs. Bodden's homesickness. Because she had no relatives at that time in the United States she considered herself a stranger there, despite being married to an American. Her honest recognition of this consideration therefore empowers her perception of the Grand Cayman of her childhood. We cannot here divorce ideas of home from the emotion of belonging, as the latter establishes a sense of identity shaped in a life and locale that can be known only *as* home.⁶⁸ Thus we may say that Mrs. Bodden's reflection of the past here automatically privileges – even takes for granted – the idea that the superlative essence of home is situated in, and sacred to, the home of the past.

The idea of home, as it denotes a community of people who share a common historical experience, can be related to the idea of the functional family home made up of individuals – a mother, father, and children – who are bound by blood and are thus indispensably connected by their sense of belonging both to each other and the otherwise intangible idea of *home*. In a similar way, the idea of the functional community home can indeed be driven by that community's unitary ideological stance that relies on like-mindedness and a sense of belonging; every member of a community who cherishes that community and are happy in it would be connected, from the outset, on these bases. Indeed, the argument could be made here that Mrs.

⁶⁸ See, for instance, Paul Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting*, translated by Kathleen Blamey and David Pellauer (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2004), p.40; bell hooks, *Belonging: A Culture of Place* (New York: Routledge, 2009), chapter 2.

Bodden experienced homesickness because when she first went to the United States she became aware (or was indeed *made* aware) that her new experiences there fell outside of those experiences that empowered her familial and communal sense of belonging as a child growing up in Cayman. This sense of belonging, which is implicit in the very utterance of homesickness, automatically evokes a common historical experience, a commonality which, from the outset, will exhibit ideas of belonging and thus like-mindedness. Thus when the ideas implicit in Mrs. Bodden's homesickness interface with the economic and occupational structure of historical Cayman especially, traditional understandings of home are bound to become more potent and legitimate in their utterance.⁶⁹

Yet later in the interview, when asked what she missed about Cayman, Mrs. Bodden replied, 'I didn't really miss that [place].'⁷⁰ This shift from homesickness to indifference marks the very geographical shift in her idea of home; thus she was homesick at a time when Grand Cayman was all she knew, but as she forged new familial and social connections in the United States she developed feelings of attachment and belonging to that country. Nonetheless, given that she clearly understood herself to be homesick at one point in her life, we should strive to illuminate this portion of her recollection which seems not only to exhibit an honest

⁶⁹ Peter Block, *Community: The Structure of Belonging* (San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc., 2008), p.11.

⁷⁰ CINA, Interview with Constance, p.12.

point of view, but which also eventually introduces the gendered nature of traditional Cayman society.

In the initial analysis, Mrs. Bodden fondly, and with a sense of innocence, recalls her childhood. She remembers, for instance, going to the government school in West Bay until she was 14, and recalls especially fondly her Jamaica teacher: ‘...he was a nice teacher’, she begins, ‘...[and] [h]is house was there [in West Bay] and we went to play...always played by the beach by the water and it was nice.’⁷¹ The interviewer then proceeds to ask her if she was able to find any work after her completion of school. The subsequent interchange is worth quoting as it segues into understandings and expressions about the Caymanian father and seaman:

Constance Bodden: No, no work at all [was available after I left school]. We just had to work at home, take care of our house and help our mother cook and wash, and it wasn’t no [paid] work at all [sic].

Marine Palmer: So did you enjoy doing housework?

CB: Yes, I enjoyed doing that. Used to go and get the weeds to brush the yard and we used to back sand every Christmas and have the yard all clean and white, looked just like snow, and it was...I enjoyed it. We had a nice childhood time growing up.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p.4.

MP: Did your mother teach you then how to cook and sew and...

CB: Sew and...yes. We went to church. We couldn't play on Sundays, we had to stay inside and just read the Bible and we didn't play at all on Sundays. We weren't supposed to go out, it was a Sabbath day to keep it holy, my mother preached to us [sic].

MP: And how did your father support a family of five children? What did he do to earn an income?

CB: He came to the United States and he used to work on yachts [as a captain]...He used to send my mother money and he took care of us and we didn't see no hardship at all....⁷²

In the initial analysis, Mrs. Bodden's positive recall of her past illuminates her sense of comfort in, and acceptance of, the unassuming lifestyle which defined that past. Let us consider the idealistic qualities of Mrs. Bodden's recollections here, where idealism strives to recount the past in positive terms.⁷³ Based on her recollection, Mrs. Bodden's idealism is necessarily so in the sense that she is not focusing on what

⁷² *Ibid.*

⁷³ Karen Armstrong, *A Short History of Myth* (New York: Canongate, 2005), pp.1-2.

many Caymanians today, in light of *their* prosperity, would consider the negative effects of economic and material hardship on an unassuming past Caymanian way of life. On the contrary, Mrs. Bodden is demonstrating the recognition that a lack of material possessions is not necessarily equivalent to suffering. Her contentment here is likely to stem from the fact that while growing up in Cayman she had enough to eat, a roof over her head and a loving family. By almost trivializing the actuality of a modest life, Mrs. Bodden has, in effect, infused historical Caymanian life with a mythical, idealistic character; one gets the impression here that actualities of economic and material dearth must undergo some degree of trivialization if the traditional idea of the Cayman home of old is to achieve greater meaning and value.

Mrs. Bodden clearly cherishes her childhood – going as far as to say ‘I enjoyed it’⁷⁴ – and this expression becomes the basis for her nostalgia when she found herself living in the United States for the first time. Nonetheless, her father’s occupational effort abroad empowers her positive expressions in an indispensable way: ‘[My father] came to the United States and he used to work on yachts [as a captain]...He used to send my mother money and he took care of us and we didn’t see no hardship at all....’⁷⁵ Here rests the inference that had it not been for her seafaring father, her lived experiences might not have gone the way they had. Not only has Mrs. Bodden demonstrated the importance of her father as the family’s sole

⁷⁴ CINA, Interview with Constance, p.2.

⁷⁵ See footnote 70.

financial provider, but her recollections begin, in qualitative terms, to instantiate the unverifiable – indeed traditional – fact that in the first six decades of the twentieth century Cayman's economy survived largely on the remittances of Caymanian seamen living temporarily abroad.⁷⁶ Where idealism can be associated with positive recalls of the past,⁷⁷ we begin to realize the indispensability of Mrs. Bodden's father to her positive recall of her childhood; it is precisely for her father's seafaring efforts that she is able to introduce him as almost a mere afterthought in her recollections; as if to say, it was typical for Caymanian men to go abroad to financially help their families in hopes of alleviating financial hardship at home. It is interesting to note that Mrs. Bodden does not dwell on her father, neither does she idolize him to the point of irrationality.

Furthermore, her passive depiction of her father counters the line of thought which stresses that the demand for maleness usually rests upon the male; this line of thought illuminates the normative nature of gender ideals in the Western world especially. Gender ideals refer to accepted understandings and images that enforce and reinforce that femininity is essentially subordinated to masculinity in all areas of existence.⁷⁸ Yet Mrs. Bodden, and indeed possibly every Caymanian woman that is in some way invested in the masculine imagery prompted by Caymanian tradition,

⁷⁶ See Craton, *Founded*, chapter 15.

⁷⁷ See, for instance, Coontz, *The Way We Never Were*, chapter 4.

⁷⁸ David Gilmore, *Manhood in the Making: Cultural Concepts of Masculinity* (Yale: Yale University Press, 1990), pp.8-10.

seems to wield a considerable amount of agency in defining the Caymanian seaman and the extent of his masculinity. As a point of clarification, I am aware that acts of seamanship, in and of themselves, would substantially aid in the shaping of a historically derived Caymanian masculinity; however, if we use Mrs. Bodden's description of her father as both provider and seaman – especially against the background that the Caymanian economy until the 1960s survived in large part on overseas remittances – it could be argued that these Caymanian seamen were to a great extent empowered by their women, their wives and mothers: they might have gone abroad to keep their families fed, but their masculine occupational acts were constantly being sustained by the preeminent reason which drove them to the sea to turtle-fish and fish in the first place...to take care of their wives and children. Thus when any Caymanian invokes the seafaring greatness of the Caymanian seaman (such a "greatness" in existence since the second phase of Cayman history, no less), they are unwittingly confirming that this greatness was shaped in large part, not by the inherent seafaring abilities of Caymanian seamen, but by a distinct economic situation together with the obvious occupational opportunity that the surrounding ocean promised. Together with the Caymanians' isolation and insularity towards 1900, Caymanian seamen became great because of an economic necessity that entailed familial considerations. This is why the Cayman Islands Seafarers' Association was able to note in 2008 that 'the incentive for these men to leave their

families was simple. Survival!"⁷⁹ Thus Mrs. Bodden's recollections with regard to her father, has introduced the idea that the Caymanian female at home contributed to defining the Caymanian seaman's masculinity and greatness based on occupational necessity.

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Yet how are we to figure the Caymanian female's contribution to defining a distinctive Caymanian masculinity when her recollections in this regard are vague, even inaccurate? Let me here introduce the arguments of Harold Mosak *et al.*, subsequently relating these to the recollections of Miss Tooksie which unwittingly express the importance of the sea in her childhood years:

Because people cannot remember all parts of the recollection, they tend to attach or project certain details or feelings or concepts onto the recollection to make it coherent. In addition those things that people choose to remember, or not to remember, about the event add meaning to the recollection. Those additions or subtractions and the selection of events that are remembered provide clinical data that can be used to understand people.⁸⁰

In the initial analysis, Miss Tooksie was not prompted by the interviewer to relate her recollections of the sea. On the contrary, she volunteered the information that her grandfather and his friend Reid Green '...[told] us bout sea life and...all o' dem kind

⁷⁹ See footnote 66.

⁸⁰ Harold Mosak *et al.*, *Early Recollections: Interpretive Methods and Application* (New York: Routledge, 2006), p.2.

of thing [sic].'⁸¹ The sea played an important role in Caymanian historical existence and in this sense, Miss Tooksie's evocation of sea life simply provides substance to Caymanian historiography; beyond this, her voluntary evocation works to sustain Mrs. Boddens' passive expression of the occupational importance of Caymanian seamanship.

Nonetheless, Miss Tooksie demonstrates a moment of confusion when the interviewer asks her, '[d]o you remember any...stories about the sea that they told you?' 'The sea?' Miss Tooksie asks, seemingly confused by the question; silence ensues, as though she is attempting to gather her thoughts.⁸² After a moment of seeming uncertainty, Miss Tooksie responds to her interviewer, although her remembrance is potentially contradictory as will be seen in the following paragraph. Nonetheless, it is important to note here that given her initial pause we should anticipate that whatever Miss Tooksie cannot remember about these historical episodes, her very attempt at a response – in light of her earlier voluntary effort, no less – becomes important not for its accuracy, but for her attempt to provide a coherent thought in the midst of forgetfulness.⁸³

⁸¹ Interview with Miss Tooksie, p.17.

⁸² *Ibid.*

⁸³ *Ibid.*, p.18.

To reiterate, Miss Tooksie begins her recollections by relaying that her grandfather and his friend Reid Green went to the Miskito Cay (off the Miskito Coast of Nicaragua and Honduras) '[to]...get turtle and all like that in bad weather? Oh, yes he used to tell us that.' That she initially poses her response in the form of a question before offering a more complete response, ostensibly to convince herself that this was indeed how the story went, leads us to believe that Miss Tooksie's recollections here are perhaps not clearly remembered. Let us look at the remainder of this segment of the interview:

HMc: Did your grandfather go for turtle, then?

AW: Yes, he go, too; my father go, too.

HMc: And your father went? Did your father tell you anything that happened to him out there?

AW: No, he didn't say nothing had happened to him out there, but he tell us 'bout...he see people almost get drown in the storm.⁸⁴

Clearly, Miss Tooksie is having difficulty explaining the specifics of her grandfather's and father's voyages to the Miskito Coast in search of turtle, thereby highlighting the possible, indeed likely, inaccuracy of her recollection. Yet she seems to compensate for this by attaching the sad account of death by drowning in an occupation which depended upon the fierce unpredictability of the sea:

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, pp.17-18.

AW: My brother was drowned out there [on the Miskito Coast], he was bootlegging.

HMc: Oh? Out by the Cays?

AW: No, it was out 'round...I don't know where, Bootlegging Cay, he never went to Miskito Cay

HMc: So he was bootlegging and a storm came up when this...

AW: I think it was some enemy cut them down.

HMc: Oh? That must have been somewhere off of Florida, around the Bahamas, was it?

AW: Might be; might a' been that.⁸⁵

A number of uncertainties play out in Miss Tooksie's recollection here: is there really a Bootlegging Cay? And if so, where is/was it? What was the nature of her brother's bootlegging? Did he die because of his bootlegging activities? Was he killed by an unknown enemy? These questions necessarily substantiate Mosak *et al.*'s argument that in the midst of her forgetfulness, Miss Tooksie has evoked a powerful emotion that tempers her understanding of her childhood.⁸⁶ By imposing a language of death on her disjointed recollection of this episode of her lived experience which involves

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

⁸⁶ Cf. footnote 81.

Caymanian seamanship, Miss Tooksie's memories here continue to inform the traditional Caymanian ethos of hardship and the seaman's role in it.⁸⁷ Although she seems uncertain as to whether her brother's death was caused by drowning or the action of an unknown enemy, her recollection, by indirection, substantiates two historical facts: first, Caymanian men went to the Miskito Coast until the 1960s to turtle-fish, and second, Caymanian men were hired by the British and American navy during World War II to patrol the Caribbean sea and sweep for mines placed by the Germans – perhaps the enemy of which Miss Tooksie speaks.⁸⁸ As Miss Tooksie's recollection here remains without a specific date, by volunteering her recollections of Caymanian seamanship, she has, in effect, provided a traditional – indeed, a long-established – image grounded in masculinity: thus her recollections ultimately confirm that her father, friend, and brother went to sea while she, and by association, her mother, aunt, and grandmother would have stayed at home. In the midst of seeming confusion, Miss Tooksie has unwittingly confirmed the importance of the seaman in both the Caymanian past and its attendant traditional imagination.

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The foregoing recollections of Mrs. Bodden and Miss Tooksie provide an ideological and socio-historical context – or environment – for Caymanian seamanship. According to Werner Erhard '[c]ontexts are constituted in language, so we do have

⁸⁷ Cf. Mary Chamberlain, *Narratives of Exile and Return* (London: Macmillan Press, 1997), chapter 1.

⁸⁸ See, for instance, Percival "Will" Jackson, 'Walking Back', in *Cayman Net News*, at <http://www.caymannetnews.com/Archive/Archive%20Articles/September%202003/Issue%20491%20Thur/491-stories.html>, September 20, 2003; February 22, 2010.

something to say about the context that limits and shapes our actions.’⁸⁹ In contextual terms, Miss Tooksie’s and Mrs. Bodden’s recollections of this aspect of the Caymanian past begin to provide it a traditional language which especially foreshadows the occupational importance of seamanship. By confirming the importance of seamanship in a historical Caymanian environment, both ladies are able to passively place themselves within their verbally evoked traditional context. Implicit in their recollections is the accepted idea of their Caymanian womanhood; as Caymanian women, their position in Caymanian society was to remain at home; their social and gendered position in this regard provide legitimacy for the indispensability of the seaman, additionally invoking the social circumstances that would have been responsible for the latter’s perceived greatness.

It is hoped that the preceding analysis has demonstrated the importance of Miss Tooksie’s and Mrs. Bodden’s recollections in establishing, in traditional terms, the general placement of gender in historical Cayman society. Indeed, I use *traditional terms* here because the statistical economic picture that was painted of Cayman earlier in the first part of this section suggested that almost as many women as men contributed to Cayman’s internal economy in the first six decades of the twentieth century. Since more Caymanians lived at home than abroad, this actuality counters the understanding that Caymanian men were likely to go to sea while their women

⁸⁹ Quoted in Peter Block, *Community*, p.15.

stayed at home and took care of their families. Nonetheless, the passivity with which both women evoke the indispensability of the Caymanian seaman, either in financial and occupational terms, feeds into the idea that although traditional thought is based on the past, in its potential idealist push, it need not take the statistical actuality of that past into consideration.⁹⁰ With the idea of traditional thought as idealization of the past firmly in mind, we now look at the life of Captain Roy Lewis Scott, together with other Caymanian seamen, and the ways in which these personalities are not only idealized in the traditional Caymanian imagination, but act as templates by which to understand the commonality of a Caymanian male seafaring greatness.

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Captain Scott was born in Cayman Brac in 1908. At the age of 14, he was employed as a deck hand, 'working with the Kirkonnell sailing ships.' The Kirkonnells are a wealthy Caymanian family who made much of their earlier fortunes carrying on trade with Jamaican and American ports. Nonetheless, like many Caymanian males, Captain Scott eventually moved to Jamaica, 'where he worked on several ships...which sailed to New York and other US ports.' Before World War II, he also worked with the United Fruit Company, 'which sailed from the Caribbean to

⁹⁰ Cf. Paul de Man, 'Intentional Structure of the Romantic Image', in *Romanticism and Consciousness: Essays in Criticism*, edited by Harold Bloom (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1970, 1st edition), pp.65-76.

England carrying bananas.’⁹¹ Formed in 1899, the United Fruit Company was an American company that specialized in the trade of bananas. The company’s sphere of influence extended throughout Central and South America, in addition to Caribbean islands like Cuba, Jamaica, and Puerto Rico. As such, many Caribbean seamen, including Caymanian seamen, were hired by United Fruit Company ships, which sailed all over the world.⁹²

Indeed, by 1950, the American merchant maritime industry had gained global prominence, and the American owner of the National Bulk Carriers (NBC) line, Daniel Ludwig, was especially keen to contract Caymanian seamen as ship hands. Nonetheless, there was a shrewdness in Ludwig’s preference of Caymanian and Bequian ship hands especially, as unlike American equivalents, these islanders were willing to work for lower wages. Beyond this, Ludwig was aware of the Caymanian seafaring past and contracted Caymanian seamen for their reliability and hardworking nature.⁹³ As a result, many Caymanian ship hands were able to rise within the ranks of NBC, after a time becoming eligible to sit professional shipping exams. As Craton notes, ‘[o]f the nearly one thousand Caymanians employed by NBC, more than fifty obtained master’s or chief engineer’s certificates.’ The

⁹¹ Seafarers’ Association, ‘Seaman and war hero’, in *Cayman Net News*, at http://www.caymannetnews.com/bracker.php?news_id=14441&start=0&category_id=7, March 27, 2009; March 21, 2010.

⁹² See especially, Peter Chapman, *Bananas: How the United Fruit Company Shaped the World* (New York: Canongate, 2007), chapter 1.

⁹³ Craton, *Founded*, pp. 298-300.

‘exceptional’ Caymanian seamen here included Harris McCoy and Darwin Tibbetts, who had become so qualified and experienced that they had been able to captain merchant supertankers.⁹⁴

Other Caymanian seamen worked independently of any overseas company, running their trade between Jamaica and Florida and, occasionally, England, while others found themselves in Jamaica, working at the Belmont Dry Dock in Kingston as shipwrights. Since the early decades of the twentieth century, Caymanian shipwrights like Daniel Jervis had been building the unique Caymanian catboat – a small sailboat used for turtle-fishing and fishing. By the post World War II years, other Caymanian shipwrights like Arnold “Cappy” Foster, continued this boatbuilding tradition, building larger schooners and sloops either in boatyards in Grand Cayman or else at the Belmont Dry Dock in Kingston.⁹⁵

With regard to the importance of the sea and the seaman in the Caymanian traditional memory, Caymanian seaman Edrei McLaughlin begins to supply a validating response of historical seamanship upon Caymanian culture when he provides an answer to the question of why it was that ‘Caymanians got this good reputation for being seamen.’ Mr. McLaughlin’s response is confidently expressed:

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p.300.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

‘...we just learnt...[we had] our own experiences...sailing boats...[sic]’.⁹⁶ So too does Tenson Scott’s understanding of himself as the consummate seaman link with a great seafaring past. He tells of Jamaican fishermen being angry with him ‘because of [his] fishening [fishing skills]’; according to him, and amusingly so, he was able to catch fish between his toes ‘when they could hardly catch anything...in their pots.’⁹⁷

Thus far, the foregoing representations of the past positively illuminate the experiences and behaviours of the experienced Caymanian seaman, thereby amassing a long-standing sensibility that can be embraced by younger Caymanians. Towards this end, I continue to assess these behaviours and experiences.

When Germany invaded Poland in 1939, and Britain’s and France’s declaration of war against the Germans signaled the beginning of World War II, Captain Scott had been residing in England. He had become a member of the Merchant’s Seaman Union in that country, and as an employee of the Webster Shipping Company he was able, by 1942, to gain his master’s license, thereby earning the rank of captain. Captain Scott is especially celebrated in the Caymanian traditional imagination for his skilful navigation in the midst of attacks from the Axis navy: ‘On a trip from England to Jamaica [during World War II] his vessel was shelled and torpedoed and missed being destroyed by only a few feet. Later, his ship was fitted with guns and

⁹⁶ CINA, Interview with Edrei McLaughlin, May 12, 1993, p.12.

⁹⁷ CINA, Interview with Tenson Scott, March 17, 1997, p. 9.

manned by British gunners', which meant that Captain Scott was a member of the Merchant Marine Reserves (MMR), which was composed of civilian sea captains who often joined the war effort in the attempt to end Axis hostilities on merchant shipping interests.⁹⁸ Other Caymanian members of the MMR, like Talbert Tatum, were not so fortunate; Captain Tatum perished at the age of 33 when his merchant ship the S.S. Tunisia was torpedoed by German U-boats in 1941.⁹⁹

Indeed, other Caymanian seamen 'served in the global merchant marine support efforts', in addition to 'maintaining a strong Home Guard around the Cayman area.'¹⁰⁰ As members of the Home Guard, Caymanian seamen were responsible for patrolling Cayman waters during World War II. In 2008, president of the Veterans' Association of the Cayman Islands, Captain Dave Ebanks reflected: "'During World War II more than 200 Caymanian men served in the naval and military forces of the United Kingdom and the United States as well as in other supportive roles.'" An unmistakable romantic patriotism belies Captain Ebanks's understanding that "'We [Caymanian seamen] probably represented the highest per capita number of all countries involved [in World War II]'" ; Mr. McLaughlin perhaps provides a pretext for this numerical yet unverifiable possibility; he remembers going to England just before World War II and being told by an English officer 'that the Caymanian was

⁹⁸ See 'Seaman and war hero'.

⁹⁹ Anonymous, 'Facing the perils of sea in a catboat', in *Cayman Net News*, at <http://www.caymannetnews.com/2006/01/1002/sister/perils.shtml>, January 6, 2006; March 21, 2010.

¹⁰⁰ See 'Seaman and war hero'.

the finest seamen in the world [sic].'¹⁰¹ Many Caymanian seamen were also responsible for patrolling the waters in the southern Caribbean during World War II; the waters surrounding Trinidad proved an important area, and with its valuable oilfields and major shipping and airbases, these waters proved a major battleground in the war, and Caymanian seamen the likes of Captain Dale and Ewart Ebanks were responsible for minesweeping them 'as well as escorting convoys of [friendly] military and transport vessels.'¹⁰² Essentially underpinned by Mr. McLaughlin's own uncorroborated account of Caymanians being referred to as the finest seamen in the world by an English officer, we begin to appreciate the likelihood that a substantive part of Caymanian traditional thought in the present centers on ideas of the sea, and in the case of World War II, ideas about the Caymanians' mastery of the sea – from the first-person vantage point of experienced Caymanian seamen especially – serves as an enduring image of national pride, ultimately crystallized in the fact that in return for his bravery and efforts in the war, Captain Scott was later 'honoured with medals from the King [of England].'¹⁰³

Thus the likes of Mr. McLaughlin and Captain Dale Ebanks are speaking for themselves and represent first-person traditionalists, while the account of Captain Scott represents an article in the *Caymanian Compass* which is being told from an

¹⁰¹ Interview with Edrei McLaughlin, pp. 23-25.

¹⁰² Anonymous, 'Governor gets Cayman's First poppy', in *Cayman Net News*, at http://www.caymannetnews.com/article.php?news_id=10979, October 26, 2008; March 21, 2010.

¹⁰³ See 'Seaman and war hero'.

anonymous third-person point of view. In this instance, the first-person recollections automatically privilege the historical Caymanian seafaring occupations based especially on turtle-fishing, fishing, and sea patrol during wartime, and the navigational prowess that Caymanian seamen demonstrated in these occupations. Based on such recollections we are able to link these decidedly masculine occupations with a sense of Caymanianness, where Caymanianness now reflexively answers the question, who is a Caymanian? Caymanian seamen were among the best seamen in the world, Mr. McLaughlin and Captain Ewart Ebanks would be quick to answer; Mr. Scott would append this answer with the assertion that because he was a Caymanian fisherman he was better than Jamaican fishermen. Yet how do first-person traditionalists connect, in a traditional sense, with the third person traditionalists, that is, those who have not experienced the traditions associated with Caymanian seamanship, but who have a vested interest in embracing these traditions as though they had experienced them?

Indeed, first-person Caymanian traditional sentiments are indispensable to the perpetuation of any subsequent, third-person Caymanian interpretation of that tradition. Important to note here is that traditional thought's very design hinges on the passing on of not only ideas from generation to generation but, more importantly, the passing on of emotions. According to Jean Klein *et al.*, '[t]o be

human is to be related’;¹⁰⁴ as human beings, we are typically drawn to the need to associate ourselves with likeminded human beings; this association is, in many instances, made possible by an initial emotional contact, where emotion can be understood as a ‘felt experience.’¹⁰⁵ How, then, does a third-party Caymanian *feel* the experience of the seafaring past? I propose that traditional-minded younger Caymanians like Mrs. Kozaily and Mr. Brown, for instance, are emotionally attached to their ancestors, and so they do not need to have felt this past experience if it was already felt by those responsible for their very national existence; their third-party feeling, if you will, works by metaphor and abstraction, as my following analysis will confirm in its conclusion of this subsection.

We should recognize that the emotional connection between first- and third-person traditionalists is necessarily historical first. Let us continue to explore this connection by again referring to Captain Scott’s account. Indeed, the very recall of Captain Scott’s past here occurs by patriotic proxy, if you will, and the language used indicates the context of the captain’s perceived epic, larger-than-life seafaring greatness. Besides drawing attention to an ideological continuum between Caymanian past and present, we realize that Captain Scott’s mediated past context gathers its reminiscent and patriotic values from its historical nature; in other words,

¹⁰⁴ Jean Klein *et al.*, *Who Am I?* (Santa Barbara: Non-Duality Press, 2006), p.19.

¹⁰⁵ Roger Fisher *et al.*, *Beyond Reason: Using Emotions as you Negotiate* (New York: Penguin Books, 2005), p.4.

this mediation, on a basic level, is not challenging the orthodoxy – or accepted view – of a historically bound Caymanian seamanship, but confirming it:¹⁰⁶ Caymanian men went to sea and became skilled seamen after a while. However, through traditional and patriotic gazes, Captain Scott's past can be understood beyond the linearity and literality of its mediated words; within these gazes are situated a context of remembering which functions on the emotion of tradition. Therefore, it is within the third-party traditional context of remembering that certain emotive issues are raised, issues that remain relevant to the eternal essence of past experiences and events. For instance, the distinct emotions of sympathy and fear seem to guide that part of the text which spoke about Captain Scott's ship being torpedoed; what was surely to have been traumatic for Captain Scott himself even years after the fact is still being relayed in traumatic terms. This potential emotive effect between the Caymanian ancestor and his progeny is not unlike the effect of Mrs. Kozaily's respect and awe for Miss Julia's musical experiences and actions; by interpreting Miss Julia's past through a temporally removed gaze, Mrs. Kozaily's words extend beyond literality and become infused with the emotion of tradition; she is "feeling" the past by intimately associating with it.

As I am still concerned with the maritime aspect of Caymanian tradition and the third-person traditionalist's perpetuation of this aspect of *their* tradition, we may

¹⁰⁶ Cf. Joanna Bornat, 'Reminiscence and Oral History', in the *Oral History Reader*, edited by Robert Perks and Alistair Thomson (Oxford: Routledge, 2009, 2nd edition), pp. 455-473.

especially choose to look at Captain Scott's career as an enduring cultural template that can be superimposed on the entire maritime history of Cayman's sixth historical phase especially. Any such template reflects not only traditional and cultural sentiments, but economic issues as well; this connection begins, according to the conscious outworking of the subconscious traditional imagination, to indicate some sort of causality between the Caymanian seaman's occupational efforts and the development of Cayman's economy.

Thus the account of Captain Scott's career captures that aspect of the traditional Caymanian emotion which understands its history as one which evolved from hardship to prosperity. In this sense, the captain's evolution from novice deckhand to a globally recognized sea captain reflects the evolution of the Caymanian economy from a largely remittances-based, weak one, to a prosperous one predicated on tourism and offshore finance. Mr. Jackson, himself a home guard seaman during World War II, captures the tenor of this evolution both in seafaring and economic terms; more specifically, Will confirms the indispensability of an evolutionary Caymanian seamanship to an evolving Caymanian economy:

Forget about the saying that Tourism [and Finance] was the beginning of success and development in Cayman. By the [19]70s, when tourism was beginning to take shape in our island, seamen had already pumped millions of dollars into [Cayman's] economy.

To the seamen goes the credit of moving the homeland out of a primitive, ancient state of life into modern living. Seamen sailed the world over on large tankers and ore carriers, and seeing what was being done in the developed countries and wanting to imitate what they saw out there, set their minds to improving life at home.¹⁰⁷

Mr. Jackson at once captures the sentiments of younger third-person Caymanians Mr. Brown and Mr. Eden, whose earlier expressions in the previous subsection evoked a traditional link between past and present. Overtones of the unassuming Caymanian ancestor drive these evocations: Mr. Brown, for instance, spoke of the Caymanian ancestor being poor but hardworking; Mr. Eden stressed that we should not overlook the fact that it is because of the hard work of the Caymanian ancestor (inclusive of the important seaman), why Cayman in the present is able to boast a strong, vibrant economy.¹⁰⁸ Paying particular attention to the ancestral Caymanian seaman, the likes of Captain Scott could not have been born a great seaman, but through hard work, experience, and perseverance he achieved this position. Introducing the economic link, in a similar way, Cayman's present-day economy was not always prosperous, but became so only after the Caymanian ancestors' hard work and perseverance. The development of an occupational way of life situated in the past reflects the wider economic development of its making, and to the extent

¹⁰⁷ Percival "Will" Jackson, 'Walking back...in the Days of the Cayman Past: The genesis of trade and tourism', in *Cayman Net News*, at [http://www.caymannetnews.com/Archive/Archive%20Articles/October%202000/Issue%2030/walking back.html](http://www.caymannetnews.com/Archive/Archive%20Articles/October%202000/Issue%2030/walking%20back.html), October 20, 2000; March 21, 2010.

¹⁰⁸ See pp.162-163.

that in the mind of the foregoing younger Caymanians especially, the two become practically synonymous, even if this is not explicitly stated. In this light, and especially in relation to Mr. Brown's and Mr. Eden's views mentioned above, the Caymanian seaman's evolved condition becomes an index by which to imply and indeed contextualize Cayman's evolved economic condition: as Captain Scott worked as a mere deckhand at the age of fourteen, Mr. Brown's and Mr. Eden's evolutionary traditional imagination essentially provides a hermeneutic by which to connect the late captain's lack of skill at this time with a weak Caymanian economy. As Captain Scott became a more proficient seaman, so too does this historical actuality connect with the gradual strengthening of Cayman's economy by the 1970s. Captain Scott's seafaring experience thus may serve as a metaphor for an evolving Caymanian economy. Where a metaphor 'is defined as understanding one conceptual domain in another conceptual domain', the actuality of the captain's development can act as a template by which to explain the development of Cayman's economy.¹⁰⁹ This is why younger third-person traditionalist Caymanians like Mr. Brown and Mr. Eden are able to effortlessly move between Cayman's economic historical circumstance and the hard-working nature of the Caymanian ancestor; both elements have, for them, become fused by metaphoric force, and thus inform and feed into each other.

¹⁰⁹ Zoltan Kovecses, *Metaphor: A Practical Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), p.4.

As we further assess the metaphorical conditioning of Caymanian traditional thought with regard to seamanship, we should also strive to further understand these same thoughts as personified abstractions. Mr. Brown's, Mr. Eden's, and even Mr. Jackson's understandings of the past have, in effect, created abstractions of the past where an abstraction may refer to understandings that, although rooted in a concrete historical existence, have accumulated further idealistic meanings outside of this concretion which is itself already being defined by mental interpretations and understandings of it.¹¹⁰ Indeed, these further idealistic meanings are likely to amass overtones of exaggeration of an earlier existence as time passes and multicultural conditions in the present prompt the need to hyper-idealize the past. In this way, traditional recollections and ideas of the Caymanian past are abstract in that their legitimacy comes more from an intellectual and traditional reworking of the past than the past itself, a reworking that is being shaped in a more modern context. Thus although there is the historically-specific emphasis of hardship in Mr. Brown's and Mr. Eden's traditional sentiments, the ancestral Caymanian male especially assumes an epic personality; what is traditionally construed in epic terms, appears unassuming in normative terms: in normative terms, Caymanian seamen were not great but steadfast occupationalists who did what they had to survive; conversely, in abstract, idealistic terms, third-person traditional understandings of the Caymanian seaman are transformed into formulaic expressions for greatness – in the midst of an

¹¹⁰ See Meredith Gattis, 'Space as a Basis for Abstract Thought', in *Spatial Schemas and Abstracted Thought*, edited by Meredith Gattis (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2001), pp.1-12.

accepted unassumingly bare lifestyle, no less – which transcend the often mundane realm of seamanship. The formula for greatness is profoundly nestled in the development of the Caymanian self, his or her “epic” drive to conquer hardship through steadfastness and a strong work ethic. Given Cayman’s present economic status, some Caymanians who did not themselves experience the past from which the tradition was developed are thus very invested in a past-present determinism which, as Mr. Brown, Mr. Eden, and Mrs. Kozaily have demonstrated, would read: “It is because of the ancestral Caymanian’s pioneering spirit and hard work that we can boast a vibrant economy and unique culture.” Via traditional thought, then, the past takes on new essential life, which serves as a means by which to further ground Caymanianness; thus positive third-person sentiments about Caymanian seamen can fuel this abstraction, thereby confirming the latter’s place both in the social and economical evolution of Cayman society.

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The previous analyses have attempted to explain the actual and figurative importance of the Caymanian seaman in the traditional Caymanian imagination. I have argued that Caymanian females living in the past profoundly reinforced the necessity that their male counterparts had to go to sea in their recollections. This positive, if somewhat passive, reinforcement opened up other important analytic avenues through which to continue to understand the indispensable position of Caymanian seamen, whether in their figurative importance to younger, third-person

Caymanian traditionalists, or the ways in which the former's development powerfully reflects the development of the Caymanian economy. These avenues, in turn, prompt another important question with regards to the Caymanian traditional imagination: were Caymanian seamen the only ones who went abroad, and if not, what is the contribution of other displaced Caymanians to traditional Caymanian thought?

3.2.4 Geographical Displacement and the Caymanian Traditional Imagination

In their geographical displacement, Caymanians automatically become participants in a politics of difference, where this concept denotes noticeable proactive and reactive efforts to remain culturally authentic in the midst of difference.¹¹¹ By virtue of the fact that these Caymanians are not in their homeland, their interactions with the established peoples of their adopted homeland are bound to stress the various differences between foreign-national and native. Indeed, any such interactions, as these occur in the public sphere, would especially speak to the Caymanian's lived experiences in his or her geographical dislocation, experiences which would essentially shape his or her Caymanianness on foreign soil; when I speak of the public sphere, I am implicating those occupational, social, and recreational – “public” – circumstances and situations in which Caymanians and, for instance,

¹¹¹ Donald Moore *et al.*, 'Introduction', in *Race, Nature and the Politics of Difference* edited by Donald Moore *et al.* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003), pp.1-71; Ernesto Laclau, 'Universionalism, Particularism, and the Question of Identity', in *The Politics of Difference: Ethnic Premises in a World of Power* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), pp.45-58.

Jamaicans would interact, away from the private interactive sphere of an intimate Caymanian community in a Kingston neighbourhood. By analyzing the Caymanian difference that is revealed in such interactions, we will be able to explain the extent to which a geographically displaced Caymanianness, as a cultural ideology, is keen to remain uniquely Caymanian even in the midst of the imposition of foreignness upon it. The Caymanians' adherence to a home culture in this context, in the first instance, begins to point to their refusal to assimilate into a host culture, thereby implicating a conscious effort to maintain their Caymanianness, indeed their unique difference. Since this consciousness must be verbally expressed if it is to accumulate potency and meaning, we should remain mindful of the ways in which words can and do affirm any relatively resistant ideology which has become a part of a traditional, long-established Caymanian outlook. Thus the following analyses strive to understand the traditionalist overtones of Caymanian difference in geographical displacement – especially in Jamaica, and to a lesser extent, Cuba – and how these overtones have helped to buttress traditional Caymanian thought in relation to various competing conceptions of foreignness.

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We first look at Caymanian Elsa Cummings, who was born in 1940, at a time when the Cayman Islands had no international airport, electricity and automobiles were nonexistent, and roads were unpaved. It has already been fully established in sections 3.1 and 3.2.1 that Cayman was not very prosperous at this time, and it was

for this reason, according to Dr. Cummings, that not too long after her birth, '[m]y mother went to [Cuba]...[because] people left Cayman to go the Isle of Pines for a better job.'¹¹² Indeed, circa 1900, Dr. Cumming's great-grandmother, Annie, had moved with her three children to the Isle of Pines when Dr. Cumming's 'mother was very little'. Annie was 'seeking a better life [for her three children]',¹¹³ for by this time, Grand Cayman's coconut industry had succumbed to blight, the once-promising phosphate industry had been discontinued, and Cayman cotton was simply too worthless to restart any sizable cotton cultivation enterprise.¹¹⁴ And, with an economy largely dependent on the remittances of its seamen by the onset of the Great Depression, it is not surprising that Caymanians other than seamen had since been looking "outward" for a livelihood.

In contrast, Cuba's economy was quite vibrant by 1900. The years between 1914 and 1926 especially proved the 'golden age' for Cuban sugar, which was in great international demand at this time. Especially between 1920 and 1926, Cuba's monoculture economy flourished before the Great Depression of 1929 hastened the collapse of that commodity. With a weakening economy thereafter, rampant unemployment resulted and American foreign investors were no longer so keen to invest in Cuba, although both countries had enjoyed close economic ties since

¹¹² CINA, Interview with Dr. Elsa Cummings, December 13, 2002, p.4.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, p.2.

¹¹⁴ See Craton, *Founded*, chapter 18.

Cuba's *de jure* independence in 1902.¹¹⁵ Nonetheless, by 1934 Cuba's economy began to recover, due in part to a favourable set of American tariffs, which once again encouraged the import of Cuban sugar; indeed, 42% of all American sugar imported was imported from Cuba after this time towards the conclusion of World War II in 1945. Thus by the 1940s, American investors were once again investing in Cuba's ameliorating economy, and Caymanians especially found themselves in that island as numerous domestic and skilled jobs were by then available.¹¹⁶ Although Dr. Cummings does not provide any details about when and why her mother came back to Cayman only to leave again a little after 1940, we should appreciate the great extent of economic and financial dearth in Cayman in her mother's decision to relocate once again to Cuba.

Dr. Cummings lived on the Isle of Pines until she was seventeen, before moving to the United States in 1957 – just two years before Cuba was to fall to communism – to further her education. The way in which she remembers her childhood in the district of Nueva Gerona not only illuminates the Caymanian imperative to make it in financially hard times, but the necessity to remain Caymanian in a foreign

¹¹⁵ Indeed, when Cuba achieved republic status on May 20, 1902, various agreements were signed between the new republic and the United States the following year; these agreements became known as the Platt Amendment, and gave the United States the right to intervene in Cuban affairs whenever it saw fit, thereby making Cuba virtual dependency of that country. See Thomas Leonard, *Castro and the Cuban Revolution* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1999), chapters 2, and 3.

¹¹⁶ See Angelo Trento, *Castro and Cuba: From the Revolution to the Present* (New York: Interlink Books, 2000), pp.17-18; see also, Leonard, *Castro and the Cuban Revolution*, chapters 1, 2, and 3.

geographical space by passing on information orally. 'My grandmother was a typical old Caymanian-timer...', she begins,

and one of the things I remember her describing was how difficult life was growing up in North Side [a district in Grand Cayman], and how at a very young age, you know, she had to wash her clothes. And she described... you know, the bucket and the...heating of water outside and... you know, scrubbing, from a young age. And that seems to have been paramount, I guess, in her mind, it was how hard things were. And she was, of course, trying to establish a contrast with... let's say the life that I was living, so it showed to me how things were relative... let's say the life I was living [in Nueva Gerona], so it showed me how [relative things could be]. At that time, I didn't realize it, but in subsequent years... in other words, what for her was a big improvement, to other people was poverty...¹¹⁷

The simple act of washing clothes is infused with traditional potency in this case; by relating the long-established experience of washing clothes, Dr. Cummings's grandmother has effectively handed down an act associated with her childhood in Cayman, thus securing *her* position as a first-person traditionalist. We notice that the brunt of her grandmother's traditionalist recall rests in the idea of hardship and the need to remember that hardship as it was substantively responsible for shaping Caymanianness with its emphasis on being satisfied with what one had. The contrast that the grandmother seeks to establish between a hard life in the Cayman Islands and a relatively easier life in Cuba seems to reinforce the indispensability of the

¹¹⁷ Interview with Dr. Cummings, p.6.

Caymanian past; in other words, things might have been somewhat better in Cuba than Cayman in the 1940s, but the invocation of the past is relative to the present in the sense that without the shaping hardship of the past, the relatively easier present could not be truly appreciated. Dr. Cummings's grandmother is verbally validating her past and her childhood, and while she is under no delusion that this past was hard, she demonstrates an awareness that she must keep this aspect of her Caymanian self alive in two important ways: by apprising herself of her past, she will remain thankful and not take her present ameliorated state for granted; and by passing on this past to her progeny, she will be able to keep the past alive in the Caymanian traditional imagination. These two elements begin to show how Caymanians in Cuba at this time were likely to attempt to ground themselves and their progeny in a Caymanianness with its roots in Cayman soil.

Caymanian Genevieve Dixon was also a member of a 'fairly large Caymanian community' in Nueva Gerona by 1940 (although she would have only been two years old by that year); her mother, a Cuban by birth, had moved to Cuba to work as a domestic worker, and her father, Captain Iverie, was lost at sea when she was just three.¹¹⁸ Nonetheless, Mrs. Dixon's understandings of the Caymanian act of telling the past dovetails with the foregoing analysis:¹¹⁹ When, for instance, asked by the interviewer if her mother consciously tried 'to bring her up to be Caymanian', Mrs.

¹¹⁸ CINA, Interview with Genevieve Dixon, March 17, 2000, p.6.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p.2.

Dixon's response proves concise although not without an undeniable cultural depth: '[My mother] would tell us [me and my siblings] about things here in Cayman, like how life was and about my grandmother that I didn't know. My grandmother [on] my father's side, and my grandfather either. She would tell us things about them and the different food that she cooked also.'¹²⁰ Although she does not specifically detail her mother's retelling of the past, being told 'how life was' seems, as in the case of Dr. Cummings's grandmother, to automatically stress a contrast between a hard life in Cayman and relatively easier life in Cuba; indeed, the recognition that a better life awaited them in Cuba was why many Caymanians moved there in the first place. Yet the need to escape a hard life does not silence the act of recollecting the past, but opens up other vital aspects of Caymanian existence with which to keep Caymanianness alive in geographical displacement. In her 2000 interview, the sixty-three-year-old Mrs. Dixon recalls her mother's 'wonderful-smelling' cassava cakes when growing up in Cuba, and links her past cultural experience with her current life in Cayman Brac when she says, '[o]h, yes, my mother used to make cassava cake. I love being here [in Cayman now], you know[,] I've been eating things I haven't eaten for long years.' Mrs. Dixon's traditional sentiment here is unwittingly confirming the singularity of the Cayman cassava cake, and like Miss Toonsie's earlier recollection, Mrs. Dixon's recollection evokes a sensorial image based especially on smell. She has thus secured the importance of the Cayman cassava cake

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, p.17.

in any past-present Caymanian cultural continuum: she is implying that when her mother made cassava cakes in Cuba, the latter was doing this in the capacity of a Caymanian with an earlier experience shaped on Cayman soil; she clearly affirms the past-present cultural continuum by confirming the cassava cake as quintessentially Caymanian, despite the fact that her mother was born in Cuba.

Similarly, Dr. Cummings recalls how her mother prepared fish “Cayman-style” in Cuba, in what the latter considered to be the ‘right way’: ‘[she cleaned] it with lime or... and, you know, salt and a little bit of black pepper on it, and fry it in Caymanian style...She also, sometimes, would cook outside. Do the... do like a... probably the equivalent of the old caboose down on the ground...’¹²¹ Although a caboose usually refers to a freight train car at the rear of a train, in the historical Cayman context a caboose is an outdoor shed which houses a grill stove fuelled either by coal or wood, and to the 1960s this was the predominant method that Caymanians used to cook their meals.¹²² Indeed, Caymanian food and its preparation, together with recalls of the immediate Caymanian past, can be seen as important attributes of Caymanianness in geographical displacement for the fact that they help to maintain the link between the unassuming, bare Caymanian past and its relatively ameliorated immediate future without the Cayman Islands. We should keep in mind that although other Caribbean islanders like Dominicans and

¹²¹ Interview with Dr. Cummings, p.7

¹²² See Craton, *Founded*, p.203.

Jamaicans, for instance, seasoned (and indeed continue to season) fish in a similar manner, and cooked (prior to the 1970s) in the equivalent of cabooses – that is, on grills built over an open ground pit (referred to as “wood fire” by many Jamaicans),¹²³ these Caymanians are guided by *their* sense of belonging within the Caymanian past; thus customs specific to *this* past become, for them, endemically Caymanian regardless of any similar customs practiced elsewhere.

As we begin to look at the Caymanians’ politics of difference in geographical isolation, the above analyses would have begun to show the shaping of Caymanianness in the private sphere of the family. At this juncture, we should ask ourselves one important question: to what extent does a decidedly private sphere of interaction influence the public sphere in which other nationalities and their impressions of the geographically displaced Caymanian are brought to bear? Let us consider Mrs. Dixon’s childhood experience in Cuba. She attended an unnamed girls’ school, and she expresses that she and other Caymanian girls who attended that school were often referred to as ‘Caimaneritos’, or little Caymanians, a term which she regarded as derogatory. Yet her response to ostensibly discriminating and

¹²³ See, for instance, Gonzalez *et al.*, *Traditional Dominican Cookery*, p.68; Isabel Brown, *Culture and Customs of the Dominican Republic* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1999); Martin Mordecai *et al.*, *Customs and Culture of Jamaica* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 2001), pp.86-92. Many modern cookbooks with a traditional bent also demonstrate that fish is similarly seasoned in the way that is detailed by Elsa Cummings; see, for instance, Enid Donaldson, *The Real Taste of Jamaica* (Toronto: Warwick Publishing Inc., 1996 reprint); Dunstan Harris, *Island Cooking: Recipes from the Caribbean* (St. Thomas, Virgin Islands: Ten Speed Press, 2003).

belittling 'Cuban girls' came in the form of an emphatic, 'Yes, I'm Caymanian!'¹²⁴ To what extent, then, did Mrs. Dixon's private interactions with established Caymanians family members shape this response?¹²⁵

Mrs. Dixon indirectly demonstrated in her 2000 interview a cultural awareness that her potentially derogatory understanding as a little Caymanian could find an authentic Caymanian response in the reaffirming acts of Caymanian culture on Cuban soil, most notably expressed in church. For instance, she speaks of the Caymanians in her neighbourhood only getting together for church events; according to her, the congregations of the Church of God and Pilgrim Holiness in Nueva Gerona were 'All Caymanian.' Although she does not go on to detail any church events, her assertion here indicates that Caymanians in this village were drawn together for religious purposes; this coming together begins to signal the expansion of the private familial sphere to include the surrounding Caymanian community.

The actuality of a physical community here opens up further exploratory avenues with regard to geographically displaced Caymanian feelings of attachment in collective terms.¹²⁶ Striving to confirm the extent of such feelings of attachment, how

¹²⁴ Interview with Genevieve, p.8.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, p.4.

¹²⁶ Cf. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, p4.

would, for instance, the community of an all-Caymanian church in Cuba sustain Caymanian ideas of the Caymanian self? As Mrs. Dixon and Dr. Cummings grew up in the same Cuban village, it is worth now looking at Dr. Cummings's understanding of the importance of church life to Caymanianness in Cuba: 'I had to participate in some of the church activities...[and on] Sundays was Sunday School and church, and then later on church at night...' ¹²⁷ Despite the vagueness of this assertion, one gets the impression that if going to church in Cuba was not mandatory then it was very important, something which Mrs. Dixon affirmed in her earlier proclamation that only Caymanians went to the Church of God and Pilgrim Holiness in Nueva Gerona. Genevieve's affirmation here does not depend on her lack of elaboration as to the activities that these Caymanians participated in at church, but rather on the actuality that "all Caymanians" denotes. It was precisely because they were Caymanians in a relatively foreign country why they were compelled to worship together; they understood themselves as a community of a people with a common past, an understanding which would have served as a coping mechanism against any Cuban derogation. When certain Cubans would refer to Caymanians as 'Caimaneritos', then, as derogatory as the term might have been, Mrs. Dixon's and Dr. Cummings's Caymanianness in Cuba was constantly being shaped not only by such derogations, but by the way in which they inevitably illuminated displaced Caymanianness in communal Caymanian eyes; thus although Cuban school girls, for

¹²⁷ Interview with Dr. Cummings, p.13.

instance, saw Mrs. Dixon as different because she was a Caymanian outsider, she countered this view in the positive by seeing herself as specifically different because she was a Caymanian in Cuba; the latter differential would have been substantively shaped in the community of Caymanians of which she was a part, each and every Caymanian there possessing the innate ability to reinforce more positive, reflexive notions of Caymanianness. Indeed, both vantage points of difference begin to confirm the ways in which existence in the private sphere can positively validate existence in a potentially more negative public sphere.

I continue to elaborate on these vantage points below, but for the time being we can understand the foregoing as belonging to a distinct diasporic discourse; in more specific terms, as members of the Caymanian Diaspora in Cuba at one point, these women have validated ideas of national singularity and the geographically displaced Caymanian need to invoke it in a foreign context. Thus Mrs. Dixon refusal to 'change her nationality' to Cuban in her later years solidifies her Caymanianness in the midst of difference at an earlier time: '[Cuba] was not going to be [our] home', she confirmed, and one begins, through the gaze of remembering, to see what Mrs. Dixon means when she expresses '...I'm glad that I didn't change my nationality or anything...I'm still Caymanian.'¹²⁸ Some Caymanians abroad were indeed keen to

¹²⁸ Interview with Genevieve, p.13.

retain their Caymanianness and this ultimately guided the expressions of their public and private lives in their geographical displacement.

I now explore the geographically displaced Caymanians' public and private lives in the context of Jamaica. As Cayman and Jamaica have strong historical ties, it is worth assessing the ways in which various private understandings of the Caymanian self established and sustained Caymanianness in the Jamaican public sphere, and how understandings were bound to amass long-established (traditional) ideas.

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As my history chapter demonstrated, the Cayman Islands had been dependencies of Jamaica since 1655, although the Jamaican government ignored their economically worthless dependencies for the following two centuries, only formally acknowledging the Cayman Islands in 1865.¹²⁹ Thus to its independence in 1962, Jamaica – once Britain's premier Caribbean island colony – represented a developed, progressive country for many Caymanians who would go there to shop, on business, or else to live. 'There was a load of Caymanian living up there [in Jamaica]', David Foster recollects in 2009, 'cause [in] those days, Jamaica was everything to us [sic].'¹³⁰ Mr. Foster initially provides a truly practical Caymanian understanding of the importance of Jamaica to Cayman in the latter's lean economic years: 'They were [the metropole]...[and] we were [the] Dependency[.] [T]hey supplied all our medical

¹²⁹ See Section 2.6.

¹³⁰ CINA, Interview with David Wade Foster, February 24, 2009, p.5.

needs...literally; religious, the monetary side of it, using their currency...Everything, our prisons, our mental health was all supplied by them.’¹³¹ ‘[Jamaica] was quite different from Cayman’, Desmond Watler also concurs in 1990; Mr. Watler moved to Jamaica in 1929 to attend Calabar College, a high school in Kingston: ‘The truth is we were a dependency of Jamaica at that time’, he continues, ‘and Jamaica was the mother...for us and more developed than we were, and...[I felt] kind of lost [there].’¹³² Indeed, it was for the reasons of Jamaica’s perceived superiority that Glair Hennings and his wife, Amy, also decided to move to Jamaica in the 1940s, and their ideas of Jamaica at this time, as these are being relayed in the couple’s 2002 interview, echo comments made by others:

...there [was] a great deal of differences between Jamaica and Cayman Brac...[o]h, yes [a] tremendous amount. The Cayman Islands, as you are aware, were controlled by Jamaica then...We ate Jamaican food, we spent Jamaican money, we...everything we did was Jamaica. If you wanted a semi-decent education, you had to go to Jamaica. If you wanted employment, you had to go to Jamaica...just about everything we did, we had to go to Jamaica.¹³³

These views of Jamaica set the basis for traditional Caymanian thought on Jamaican soil; by introducing a language based on the fundamental differences between Jamaica and Cayman, any subsequent expressions of these respondents will strive to

¹³¹ *Ibid.*

¹³² CINA, Interview with Desmond Watler, November 27, 1990 p.4.

¹³³ CINA, Interview with Amy & Glair Hennings, April 15, 2002, p.35

explain the extent of this difference. Although the Jamaica of the 1940s is being described as great and grand by Caymanians who lived there at that time, a ubiquitous us/them binary resonates in their recollections of Jamaica; with this in mind, we should be mindful of the fact of the inherent dialectical nature of any binary system, where dialecticism denotes any default sort of conflict which is bound to eventually arise from ideologically differing forces and the resolution which proceeds from any such clash.¹³⁴ In this sense, we should anticipate that in geographical displacement, Caymanians will carry their own self-conscious understandings in relation to Jamaicanness regardless of the perception in the traditional Caymanian imagination that Jamaica was better off than Cayman in the 1940s and even the 1950s. Such self-conscious understandings, as we will see, speak to the ways in which the Caymanian living in Jamaica was able to see themselves both as communal Caymanians and foreigners.

Thus according to initial Caymanian interpretations of Jamaica, the image of the latter island in earlier years looms large, if only in retrospect (for Jamaica and Jamaicans in present times have become anathema to certain Caymanians as we will see in section four). Like the onset of a global American cultural hegemony after World War II, many Caymanians were being “culturally affected” by a more

¹³⁴ Alan Norrie, *Dialectic and Difference: Dialectical Critical Realism and the Grounds of Justice* (Oxford: Routledge, 2010), part 1. For more pioneering ideas on dialectism, see Max Horkheimer *et al.*, *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002 1st edition); Georg W.F. Hegel, *The Phenomenology of Spirit*, translated by J.B. Baillie (www.digireads.com: Digireads.com Publishing, 2009 reprint).

developed Jamaica. When I say *culturally affected*, I am speaking of the ways in which Jamaican ways of doing and being were especially bound to influence those Caymanians living there; for instance, when the Henningses and Mr. Foster speak about being affected by Jamaican cuisine, shopping, education, etc., they have demonstrated that they were influenced by a general Jamaican way of life.¹³⁵ However, we return to the idea that although Caymanians might have been culturally affected by a Jamaican way of life, Jamaica's status as cultural hegemon over the Caymanians living there need not be interpreted in strictly positive terms of cultural affectation; in other words, where the term cultural hegemony represents '...the binding together of people...around cultural norms and standards that emanate over time and space from seats of power occupied by authoritative actors',¹³⁶ Caymanians, as a foreign entity, would have nonetheless still been keen to preserve their own singular selves in Jamaica. Just because Jamaica was considered to be in charge of Cayman at this time, does not mean that Caymanians living there were likely to completely assimilate into Jamaican culture.

Nonetheless, we should, from the outset, appreciate that Cayman's economic inferiority to the early 1960s together with its indispensable Jamaican political connection made it dependent on Jamaica; placing emphasis on the political connection, Cayman's dependence on Jamaica was indeed further underscored by

¹³⁵ See footnotes 132 and 133.

¹³⁶ John Agnew, *The New Shape of Global Power* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2005), p.2.

the understanding, as expressed by Mrs. McLaughlin, that 'in those days we [Caymanians] weren't very politically minded.'¹³⁷ It is true that eligible Caymanian males had been voting since 1831,¹³⁸ but it was not until the 1962 general elections (after the Jamaica-Cayman connection had been substantively severed) that we witness a dynamic Caymanian political situation splintered between Duncan Merren's white pro-British stance and Ormond Panton's – known also as 'Little Bustamante' – Jamaican-type political outlook.¹³⁹ Nonetheless, prominent Caymanian businessman Captain Charles Kirkconnell expresses his understanding of the political situation to 1962: '...Caymanians on a whole were never worried about politics in those days. It was...you just went in to represent, elected as a representative, and you got nothing for it, so you went in, you just did a job. You didn't think about it anymore than that.'¹⁴⁰ With a decidedly insular political way of life which lacked dynamism, Caymanians were, prior to the 1960s, satisfied to have their greater needs taken care of by Jamaica, a satisfaction that perhaps helped to inform their political indifference at that time; thus Caymanians at this time were hardly functioning as nationalists keen on self-sufficiency. We fully assess the evolution of Caymanian political thought from one of indifference to intense

¹³⁷ CINA, Interview with Sybil McLaughlin, February 11, 1993, p.6.

¹³⁸ In December, 1831, the leaders of Grand Cayman introduced a form of representation government due in large part to the administrative neglect of Jamaica. Nonetheless, historical documentation here is not specific with regards to the age of these eligible voting males, although we can be certain that free male inhabitants from 16 to 60 were required to join the local militia; see 'Acts and Laws of Grand Cayman', Dispatch No. 68, November 16, 1834, PRO, CO 137/193, ff. 271-286.

¹³⁹ See Craton, *Founded*, chapter 14.

¹⁴⁰ CINA, Interview with Captain Charles Kirkconnell, March 7, 1995, p.5.

vibrancy later in the following subsection, as the argument expands to include the beginnings of Caymanian xenophobia and nationalism as distinctly expressed towards Jamaicans.

For the time being, however, and taking in this instant hegemony to mean the “welcomed” dominance of one nation over another, whether it be culturally, technologically, politically, and so on, it is worth quoting Lea Brilmayer’s idea here as the basis for beginning to understand the Jamaica-Cayman connection to 1962: ‘We live in a world of immense...inequalities. [Within and among nations], there are tremendous disparities in people’s access to food, commercial goods and services, political influence, education, health care, and almost every other ingredient of the good life.’¹⁴¹ Cayman’s economy and unassuming lifestyle at this time placed it firmly on the unequal end of the social and economic fulcrum, so to speak, in relation to “metropole” Jamaica. In light of these social and economic inadequacies, Mr. Foster, Mr. Watler, and the Henningses, for instance, had acted upon the idea that Jamaica would have been a far easier place to settle down than, say, the Isle of Pines or even the more developed United States; this action was also possible for the fact that Jamaica represented, for many Caymanians, what was familiar given the Jamaica-Cayman historical connection. Yet in the midst of such positive recollections of Jamaica, and the ways in which Jamaican culture affected the Caymanians living

¹⁴¹ See Lea Brilmayer, *American Hegemony: Political Morality in a One-Superpower World* (Yale: Yale University Press, 1996), p.11.

there, I contend that Caymanianness figured more as a cultural enclave in Jamaica to at least 1962; when I say *cultural enclave* I mean that Caymanians living in Jamaica would have *ultimately* been more inclined to see themselves as culturally distinct and apart from Jamaicans. Thus the question which this displaced Caymanianness automatically asks – that is, “who am I as a Caymanian living in Jamaica?”, in the first instance signals, in discrete terms, the Caymanians’ traditional effort to invoke ideas of Caymanian difference. When, for instance, Mr. Foster’s interviewer proceeded to ask him if he grew up in Jamaica as a Caymanian in Jamaica, his response is indeed culturally revealing in this light:

We were totally surrounded by Caymanians, because my mother had a boarding house...and that’s where they stayed; we had nine bedrooms, and, you know, labour was very cheap, and we had excellent, excellent maids up there, really good cooks, so we used to take them in, so there was no end of Caymanians coming up here to get married, to get visas, you know, and government business...We had more Caymanians staying there than...[Laughter] at any one time we would have like two, three [seamen] staying with us...[s]o we were always hearing [news] about Cayman [from Caymanians]...¹⁴²

Although Mr. Foster’s recount of the past does not detail specific acts of Caymanian culture in Jamaica, his reliance on the Caymanian collective serves to distinguish himself and his fellow Caymanians from Jamaicans, something that automatically illuminates the Caymanian past; he has unwittingly affirmed the default importance

¹⁴² CINA, Interview with David Wade Foster, February 24, 2004, p.12.

of the past in his invocation of the Caymanian label, for without the shaping acculturating force of the past on Cayman soil, established Caymanians could not have legitimately been called Caymanians in the first place. By constantly referring to the fact, therefore, that many Caymanians lived or temporarily stayed in his mother's boarding house in Kingston, Mr. Foster is also affirming this dwelling space as a Caymanian one; by virtue of its Caymanian clientele, his mother's boarding house has effectively become a private Caymanian space on Jamaican soil, and possesses an automatic ideological link to Cayman society and its acculturating history. Mr. Foster's recollection infuses his mother's boardinghouse with national importance: this space has, in effect, become a microcosm of Cayman society in essential traditional terms.

Any Caymanian sense of community here is further underpinned in the conveyance of news by transient Caymanians to those long-term Caymanians who would have been living in that boarding house: one gets the impression from Mr. Foster's account that long term Caymanians in Jamaica were keen to remain abreast of current developments in Cayman, thereby signifying their understanding of themselves not only as Caymanians but as geographically displaced Caymanians with a communal sense of belonging to their native land. His ideas here substantively aid the Caymanians' perceived sense of difference in relation to their Jamaican host.

Thus as great as a Jamaican way of life was to the Caymanians that went there, it was not home. Mr. Hennings's reflections continue to illuminate the Caymanians' understanding of their difference in Jamaica: 'When I was living in Jamaica, in the country...we went school, we rode a donkey, we rode a mule...[and rode] from up in St. Mary down to Kingston on a country bus...[Laughter]...it was fun for a kid.' Nonetheless, despite his "fantastic" upbringing by his aunt in the rustic Jamaican parish of St. Mary, before moving to Kingston to work at the Belmont Dry Dock, Mr. Hennings reveals his ultimate Caymanianness: '[although] I had a wonderful, fantastic childhood[,] I would miss my people and cry like the devil [because] I wanted to come back home.'¹⁴³ As with his Cuban equivalents Mrs. Dixon and Dr. Cummings, Mr. Hennings's idea of home was fashioned into a coping language which secured the sanctity of the Caymanian homeland in geographical displacement. A Caymanian created binary belied a Jamaican hegemonic influence, and Caymanians in Jamaica were keen to invoke this seemingly benign us/them binary that initially emanated from their perceived difference as seen through Jamaican eyes. I here quote portions of Roy Bodden's interview at length:

¹⁴³ Interview with Amy and Glair Hennings, p.22.

- Heather McLaughlin: When did you become aware of the fact that you were Caymanian and not Jamaican? Or did you ever become aware of that? [Laughter]
- Roy Bodden: I think I became aware of it, once...on the one...at one time, and I think that made it, of course, you know...it was stamped...I went to...we...okay, after I left Mrs Langley's school, my mother put us in Government school, my brother and I, and I can remember being called a 'Knackie'.
- HMc: A knackie?
- RB: Yes, you never heard that term?
- HMc: No.
- RB: Jamaicans used to call...it's a...it's really a corruption of the Hawaiian word, 'kanaki' or 'Kanaka'¹⁴⁴ which means, you know, 'outsider'..and they [Jamaicans] used to call Caymanians 'Knackies'.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴⁴ This word does not appear to be included in either F.G. Cassidy *et al.*, *Dictionary of Jamaican English* (Kingston: The University of the West Indies Press, 2009, 2nd edition), or Richard Allsopp, *Dictionary of Caribbean English Usage* (Kingston: The University of the West Indies Press, 2003 reprint). However, *The Compact Edition of the Oxford Dictionary* supplies the primary meaning for a Kanaka as a 'native of the South Sea Islands, esp. one employed in Queensland [Australia] as a labourer on the sugar plantations.' The variation of this word in the Jamaican context term indeed denotes the concept of outsider, or foreigner. See *The Compact Edition of the Oxford Dictionary*, p.907 [p.346].

¹⁴⁵ CINA, 'Interview with Glenroy "Roy" Bodden', p.11.

The very utterance of the word “knackie” confirms the idea that Jamaicans were likely to see Caymanians as outsiders – as foreigners; but did Caymanians in Jamaica at this time view this label as derogatory? Although Mr. Hennings goes on to express his initial shock at being called a knackie, he later voices his realization that the term was not as damning or derogatory as he had first thought, but just an expressed acknowledgement of difference based fundamentally on the fact that ‘Caymanians never did talk like Jamaicans.’¹⁴⁶ He was here referring to the Caymanian accent which in the present has been described as ‘a mixture of [British] accents from Wales, Ireland and Cornwall, with a dash of American southern drawl and a Scottish lilt to end a sentence.’¹⁴⁷ Similarly, Mrs. Hennings confirms that ‘Jamaicans referred to Caymanians, back in the old days as ‘knackies ...[and] I don’t know that came to my thoughts, but that’s what everybody...I mean, it was not done in a derogatory manner...it was friendly.’ ‘I believe Caymanians used that [word] more than Jamaicans did’, she continued, laughing, thereby effectively defusing any xenophobic undertones in that instant.¹⁴⁸

The term knackie became an accepted standardized term with which to describe the Caymanian living in Jamaica. Based on Mr. Hennings’ initial offence at the word, one gets the impression that Caymanians in Jamaica were likely to take offence at the

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁷ Interview with Amy and Glair Hennings, p.20.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

word in their earlier years there. The nature of this offence perhaps spoke to the initial culture shock of Caymanians when they first arrived in Jamaica. At the point of initial contact, Caymanians like Mr. Bodden and the Henningses were likely to understand themselves as 'culturally disparate entities' in relation to Jamaicans. This translated into the initial failure of some Caymanians to adjust within their host culture, a failure which seemed bound to express itself in terms of national low self-esteem: in other words, Caymanians who were likely to initially take offence at the term *knackie* would have been aware of their status as foreigners from a "lesser" country; thus the very Jamaican invocation of the Caymanian as outsiders would have served to highlight the economically ailing Caymanian's reasons for settling in Jamaica in the first place. However, by Mr. Hennings's own subsequent admission, together with the expressions of his wife, these Caymanians in Jamaica had become successful sojourners in emotional terms as is shown by their eventual acceptance of the term *knackies*; after extensive interaction with the members of their host culture, they came to the conclusion that Jamaicans really meant nothing by the term, and as such, the former were keen to embrace this label as a mere expression of their national difference and nothing more. Yet the understanding should not be missed that despite the Caymanians' eventual acceptance of this label, Jamaicans and Caymanians were discrete entities, something which made this label possible in the first place. One begins here to appreciate the ways in which hegemonic effects need

not be undergirded by the total abandonment of a sense of Caymanianness merely for the sake of financial benefit.¹⁴⁹

In conclusion, just as Caymanianness implies the question of what does it mean to be Caymanian, the idea of foreignness asks what does it mean to be a foreigner. Dr. Cummings and Mrs. Dixon together with the Henningses, Mr. Foster, Mr. Watler, and Mr. Bodden, by virtue of their geographical displacement, have expressed long-established sentiments that implicate both foreignness and Caymanianness. These informants have demonstrated the understanding that they saw themselves as foreigners in Jamaica and Cuba; yet their vibrant sense of foreignness here is underpinned by an even stronger sense of Caymanianness. To further break down the idea of the inherency of Caymanianness and foreignness within the displaced Caymanian's body and psyche, it is worth looking at the issue of cross-cultural perceptions. As Edwin Thumboo expresses, 'when one group of people – whether a national entity or a little village – engages...another, an equation of contact is created: We have I/Self and You/Other. Behind either one is nothing less than their total horizontal (their public, more open) and vertical (their personal, more inward) life.'¹⁵⁰ Based on this idea, the geographically displaced Caymanian's foreignness in Cuba and Jamaica would have not only occurred at the point of contact with Cubans

¹⁴⁹ See Colleen Ward *et al.*, *Psychology of Culture Shock* (London: Routledge, 2001, 2nd edition), pp.1-18.

¹⁵⁰ Edwin Thumboo, 'Conditions of Cross-Cultural Perceptions', in *Embracing the Other: Addressing Xenophobia in the New Literatures in English*, edited by Dunja Mohr (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2008), p. 11.

or Jamaicans, but this contact could have only occurred within the horizontal, public sphere of Caymanianness. Thus as Caymanian men, for instance, worked in the public space of the Belmont dry dock, or as Caymanian women worked as washerwomen in Cuba, the very fact of their Caymanian nationality would have automatically served to set them apart. Indeed, the Jamaican reference to Caymanians as knackies, for instance, indicates the ideological process of “public space” cross-cultural perceptions that advantaged Jamaicans: at the point of cultural contact between these two nationalities, the Jamaican had the dual advantage of being in *their* ancestral geographical cultural sphere (as it were) together with outnumbering the immigrant Caymanian; thus any eventual, expressively tangible cross-cultural perceptions between these nationalities would have expressed ‘nuances of inequalities, and one-sided understandings, urges, preferences and judgments.’¹⁵¹ Given the initial derogatory connotation of knackie in the Caymanian mind, Jamaicans could have been thereby understood to have pejoratively answered the question that the Caymanian essence of foreignness would have automatically asked. The imposed label of knackie in the context of Jamaica, and little Caymanian in the Cuban context, at once illuminates the geographically displaced Caymanian’s sense of national difference and its concomitant sense of isolation.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*

Yet there seems to be an essential causal link between outside, imposed perceptions upon the geographically displaced Caymanian's horizontal, public existence and his vertical, private life; in other words, such imposed understandings on the Caymanian, led to the former's reflexive imperative to define and indeed redefine the Caymanian self in terms ranging from neutral to positive. It is for this very link why Mr. Foster, for instance, was so keen to express the greatness of Caymanian maids living in Jamaica; or why Glair was able to express that as great as Jamaicans and Jamaica were, these were ultimately not indicators of true Caymanianness; these respondents have striven to connect their worth as geographically displaced nationals with their own nurtured perceptions of an unchanging Caymanianness. Thus as traditionalists, they have demonstrated that they have internalized their Caymanianness in geographical displacement.

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In light of this internalization, we should not ignore the possibility of a reversed Caymanian/foreigner ideological dichotomy on *Cayman soil*; Section 4 comprehensively demonstrates this dichotomy with regards to xenophobic Caymanian understandings of foreignness. I contextualize such understandings in Cayman's phenomenal economic development beginning in the 1970s, a development which witnessed a substantial influx of foreign nationals. Thus where the geographically displaced minor Caymanian established enduring ideas of themselves in relation to Jamaicans and Cubans at an earlier time, not only is the

present Caymanian discourse of difference on Cayman being fuelled by such traditional ideas, but by the deafening Caymanian complaint that because of the great number of foreign-nationals in Cayman, the *Caymanian* is now in the minority; this complaint remains to be proven in Section 4. However, for the moment keeping in mind that there are more Jamaicans in Cayman than any other foreign nationality, I contend that the historical reasons for such a complaint, finds its basis in the shifting political relationship between Jamaica and the Cayman Islands towards the 1970s.

3.3 Conclusion: Points of Departure: Shifting Caymanian Traditional Understandings of Jamaica and Jamaicans

In November 1944 Jamaicans had been granted universal adult suffrage. This development signaled the initial stage of Jamaica's independence process, where a limited form of ministerial government was (on the basis of universal adult suffrage) introduced. By 1953, Jamaica's political parties, the Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) and People's National Party (PNP), had amassed considerable local support, marking the beginnings of a Jamaican populism premised on trade unionism. However, it was the JLP that would win the 1953 general elections, and its leader, Alexander Bustamante, who would become Jamaica's first Chief Minister. At the heart of the local Jamaican political imperative rested the desire to achieve full internal-self government, something that could not have been achieved overnight, but which

Jamaica's charismatic leaders in the figures of the PNP's Norman Manley and JLP's Bustamante had been long envisioning. Thus in 1959, due in large part to the increasing pressuring on Britain by America to gradually free its colonies from the ostensible despotism of colonialism, complete internal self-rule was granted and Jamaican affairs were by then concentrated in the hands of new Chief Minister, Norman Manley.¹⁵²

Yet as we strive to figure the position of Cayman in Jamaica's political advancements, Jamaica's grant of full internal self-rule in 1959 did not happen in isolation but within the context of federation. Indeed, the main objective of the British Caribbean Federation Act of 1956 was to bind its Caribbean members politically and economically: the Caribbean islands of the British West Indies were quite small and thus more vulnerable to the vicissitudes of the global economic market. Therefore, any such federation, which had the option of being a part of the British Commonwealth (which is presently '...a voluntary association of 54 countries that support each other and work together towards shared goals in democracy and development'¹⁵³), would lessen the economic stress and vulnerability of eventual

¹⁵² See, in its entirety, Trevor Munroe, *The Politics of Constitutional Decolonization: Jamaica, 1944-62* (Kingston: University of the West Indies Press, 1972, 1st edition); Michael Kaufman, *Jamaica under Manley: Dilemmas of Socialism and Democracy* (London: Zed Books, 1985), chapter 3; Anthony Payne, *Politics in Jamaica* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994), introduction.

¹⁵³ Commonwealth Secretariat, *Commonwealth Secretariat*, at <http://www.thecommonwealth.org/subhomepage/191086/>, 2010; August 21, 2010. Formally established in 1931, by the 1950s and 1960s the British Commonwealth had expanded beyond its original members of Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Irish Free State and Newfoundland, to include newly independent countries, many of them former British colonies. For further information

independence among its members, thereby rendering any such scheme politically and economically more able in its solidarity. The Federation was formally established in 1958; its members were: Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, Jamaica, Montserrat, St. Kitts-Nevis-Anguilla, St. Lucia, St. Vincent, and Trinidad and Tobago. The Federation only lasted four years, however, dissolving in 1962, after Jamaica's decision – countenanced by a national referendum in 1961 – to leave it; Trinidad withdrew not long after, and without the Caribbean's two leading economies to guide it, the Federation's fate was effectively sealed. Nonetheless, scholars like Denis Benn have argued that Norman Manley and his supporters only used the Federation to precipitate Jamaica's total independence from Britain on August 6, 1962.¹⁵⁴ Ulf Hannerz gives any such ulterior motive a firmer historical basis, if in retrospect: '...it seems as if most of the British Caribbean territories were moving quickly toward individual independence in the form of the West Indies Federation.'¹⁵⁵

The Cayman Islands and its inhabitants were, more or less, bystanders in the events surrounding the establishment and the dissolution of the West Indies Federation; yet, as we will see, reworked Caymanian traditional sentimentality with regard to Jamaica and Jamaicans can be effectively related to these developments. In the first

here, see, for instance, Norman Hillmer *et al* (eds.), *The First British Commonwealth: Essays in Honour of Nicholas Mansergh* (London: Frank Cass & Co. Ltd., 1980).

¹⁵⁴ Kaufman, *Politics in Jamaica*, introduction.

¹⁵⁵ Ulf Hannerz, *Caymanian Politics: Structure and Style in a Changing Island Society* (Stockholm: Department of Social Anthropology, University of Stockholm, 1974), p. 125.

instance, although they had been participating in proposed Federation talks since 1947, Caymanian legislators Ernest Panton and Willie Farrington had initially 'made it clear that their Assembly would agree to join only if the Cayman Islands had direct representation in the Federation legislature.' But given Cayman's lack of political and economic influence, even in relation to the smaller Eastern Caribbean islands, this hard-line ultimatum was rejected by the Standing Closer Committee in 1949, and the Cayman Islands' status in any future Federation was unilaterally confirmed as 'a dependency under the administration of the Governor-General of the Federation.'¹⁵⁶ As such, the Cayman Islands never became a full-fledged participating member of the short-lived West Indian Federation. Yet, this earlier confirmation of Cayman's would-be position both in relation to the potential West Indian Federation and a Jamaica poised for greater self rule did not sit well with a structurally anachronistic Caymanian legislature – or Vestry – which consisted of 32 elected members largely left to their own devices, and which centered largely on promoting the interests of Cayman's well-to-do merchant class.¹⁵⁷

Nonetheless, sensing a pan-Caribbeanist change in the air, new Commissioner to Cayman in 1952, Andrew Morris Gerrard, stressed that Caymanians must face the 'new realities' and abandon living according to the edicts of a past settler tradition steeped in nepotism, favoritism, and economic stagnation. For instance, Gerrard did

¹⁵⁶ Quoted in Craton, *Founded*, p. 307.

¹⁵⁷ Hannerz, *Caymanian Politics*, p.132.

not like that the Vestry did not apply unequivocal fairness when it came to demanding taxes and customs duties from qualified citizens, for where else would substantial revenue be made in an economy still surviving largely upon the remittances of its overseas seamen? Although the Caymanian Vestry needed to take a more pro-active, modern approach to ideas of development, their understanding that any such development be indispensably linked to a Jamaica rapidly becoming less British proved the basis for their displeasure.¹⁵⁸

In technical terms, Cayman's lack of a constitution meant that Jamaica had the right to make decisions on behalf of Caymanians without consulting them, even though the Jamaican political machine had been allowing 'them to manage their own affairs', with the aid of a British-appointed Commissioner who, in the Cayman context, hardly wielded any control over the islands' internal affairs. Nonetheless, the very possibility that Jamaica could legally intervene in Cayman's internal affairs at any time rendered Caymanian legislators ultimately ineffective, something that did not sit well with Caymanian merchants especially, many of whom had advantageous political ties with the former. Among these merchants was Ducan Merren. Heir to the substantial Merren merchant throne, Ducan Merren returned to Cayman just before the onset of World War II, and by 1958 was a member of Cayman's Federation delegation, demonstrating his displeasure with Jamaica's

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p.133.

potentially wide and unequivocal control over Cayman's internal affairs after that island had been granted full internal self-government.¹⁵⁹ Although he wanted the ties between Jamaica and Cayman to remain "close," he argued that any such ties must be tempered by an ultimate 'British connection', and especially in light of the very – by then – clear Jamaican intention to achieve greater independence from Britain. On the other end of the political Caymanian spectrum was situated Ormond Panton, also a Federation delegate by 1958. With great political ambition, Ormond 'favoured a break with Britain and a closer relationship with Jamaica within the framework of the Federation, as long it involved a greater degree of self-government.'¹⁶⁰ Both political viewpoints returned to the same Caymanian political conception: Caymanian politicians wanted a greater degree of internal self-rule without the possibility of an all-Jamaican cabinet government exercising its authority at whim.

Nonetheless, and despite Cayman's dependency position within the Federation, the British government was keen to constitutionally modernize the Cayman Islands, demonstrating the understanding that internal Caymanian political affairs should fall under a constitution constructed to serve local particularities. Due to a collaborative effort between Jamaican governor Kenneth Blackburne, Cayman Commissioner Jack Rose, and Caymanian politicians, Cayman's first written

¹⁵⁹ Craton, *Founded*, p.307.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

constitution was implemented on July 4, 1959. Among other things, the constitution did away with an archaic legislation system. Instead, it implemented an 18-member legislative assembly. Twelve of these figures were to be elected by the newly introduced Adult Suffrage Act, while three were to be appointed official members in the posts of Chief Secretary, Attorney-General, and Financial Secretary. An Executive Council was also introduced, headed by the Administrator along with 'two official, one nominated, and two elected members.' The Executive Council had the powers to implement social policies. The constitution also ensured that Cayman's legislature would no longer be under the complete control of Jamaican Legislators (which had achieved full internal cabinet government by the ratification of Cayman's first constitution), although the Jamaican governor headed the Cayman Legislature and had the right to intervene accordingly on behalf of the Crown.¹⁶¹

By early January 1962 Cayman's status in relation to the Federation – itself unstable by this time given Jamaica's desire, in the form of a national referendum the year before, to completely free itself of British control – was most precarious, and much to the alarm of Jamaican Governor Kenneth Blackburne, who visited Grand Cayman on January 17, 1962. Given Cayman's dependent status in the Federation, once the likely dissolution of that entity was achieved – a dissolution which would occur just months later in May – the Cayman Islands, in theory, would cease to be a British

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p.321.

Dependency although they would remain a member of the Commonwealth.¹⁶² Given their vulnerability by virtue of being so economically and politically insignificant, Caymanians would, for a period of five years, be given a chance to govern themselves. Britain would appoint a Lieutenant Governor, whose normal powers under Crown Colony arrangement would be drastically curtailed, as he would have been immediately answerable to the Caymanian Council of Ministers. Merren's earlier desire that the Cayman-Britain connection remain in the face of growing Caymanian political autonomy seemed on the verge of being fulfilled, albeit with more national autonomy than he could have ever imagined.¹⁶³

However, this political autonomy never materialized, and when Jamaica gained its independence on August 6, 1962, the Cayman Islands and the Turks and Caicos Islands (another of Jamaica's dependencies) became direct dependencies of Britain, although at the behest of the latter, Jamaican officials agreed to send vital human resources to these islands including teachers, nurses, police officers, construction workers, and so on.¹⁶⁴ Nonetheless, not only did many Caymanians continue to actively resist the very likelihood of becoming a dependency of an independent Jamaica, but it was this very resistance that marked a turning point in hitherto positive Caymanian sentiments of Jamaica. Yet the question should be asked, why

¹⁶² *Ibid.*, p.314.

¹⁶³ Hannerz, *Caymanian Politics*, p.138.

¹⁶⁴ See Brief for British Representatives in the Turks and Caicos and the Cayman Islands, October, 1962, PRO, CO 1031/3387, ff. 7-11.

were Caymanians so keen to resist becoming part of a nation that many of them had once regarded as a progressive metropole? In the initial analysis, we can be certain that this ideological shift was decidedly political.

By November 1962 Caymanian politicians had split into two political camps: Ormond Panton's National Democratic Party (NDP), and Willie Farrington's Christian Democratic Party (CDP). Issues of self-government were at the forefront of a burgeoning internal political Caymanian awareness, with Panton keen to retain close political ties with Jamaica and Farrington devoted to sustaining Cayman's British connection. Therefore, when public elections were held in Cayman in November, 1962, less than four months after Jamaica had become officially independent, it did not sit well with Cayman's elites – who were CDP supporters – that Panton's party had won seven seats while the CDP had only managed to win five. Nonetheless, with the help of British Administrator to Cayman Jack Rose and Governor Blackburne, together with the support of popular pro-British populists Roy McTaggart and Captain Eldon Kirkonnell, the CDP 'effectively formed the [Cayman Islands] government in 1962', blocking any desire on Panton's part to bring an independent Jamaica and Cayman closer. Indeed, the CDP and administrator Rose had been able to manipulate the election results to their own end, but there is

evidence, as we shall see, that this political strong-arming was supported by many Caymanians who were very dedicated to not becoming a dependency of Jamaica.¹⁶⁵

The relieved sighs of Charles Kirkonnell that Cayman did not ultimately become a dependency of Jamaica begins to set the tone for a distinct brand of Caymanian xenophobia towards Jamaica and Jamaicans well after the fact of Jamaica's independence movement:

Charles Kirkonnell: So, independence and all that never crossed our mind, or didn't... it was meaningless. Actually Caymanians could have been caught, and this is where Dr. Roy [McTaggart] came in. He saved the day when he got up there and... otherwise Cayman, today, would have been under Jamaica.

Heather McLaughlin: Yes, yes.

CK: So that was his redeeming feature

HMc: Yes.

CK: And we all owe him a great debt of gratitude for...he saw the...foresight.

HMc: For seeing what this was going to mean.

¹⁶⁵ Craton, *Founded*, p.316.

CK: He was very forceful when it came to that, in convincing...and from then on, people became more aware of the consequences.¹⁶⁶

However, just what were these consequences of which Captain Kirkonnell spoke? Although he is speaking about the past, we should, in the initial analysis, ask ourselves the likely extent to which the present condition of Jamaica influences the Captain's intimations here. Indeed, by January 2006 the Caribbean media dubbed Jamaica, and in particularly its capital Kingston, 'the murder capital of the world, after 2005 saw more than 1600 people killed – a tally of at least five murders a day.'¹⁶⁷ Four days into 2006, thirteen people had already been murdered, but this was nothing new for Jamaica, statistically speaking.¹⁶⁸ Between 1995 and 1999 (when many of the interviews I have used throughout this section were transcribed), a total of 4,545 people, mostly Jamaicans, were murdered: 780 people were murdered in 1995, 925 in 1996, 1,038 in 1997, 953 in 1998, and 849 in 1999. In contrast, only five people were murdered in the Cayman Islands in the same period. However, between 2000 and 2001, 2,026 murders were committed in Jamaica, at total that '[exceeded] the total number of murders for the period 1960-1974 [which amounted

¹⁶⁶ Interview with Captain Kirkonnell, p.15.

¹⁶⁷ BBC Caribbean, 'Jamaica "murder capital of the world"', http://www.bbc.co.uk/caribbean/news/story/2006/01/060103_murderlist.shtml, January 3, 2006; May 15, 2009.

¹⁶⁸ See Caribbean Net News, 'Jamaica is murder capital of the world', *Caribbean Net News*, <http://www.caribbeannetnews.com/2006/01/09/capital.shtml>, January 9, 2006; May 15, 2009.

to] a total of 1,767 murders.’¹⁶⁹ Jamaican scholars like Trevor Munroe have, by implication, associated Jamaica’s alarming murder rate with a historically derived culture of dependence on leaders and figureheads, political and economic underdevelopment, and deference to colour and class.¹⁷⁰

In light of this current political cronyism-cum-violence in Jamaica, we can also appreciate the long-established, traditionalist sense of relief of Caymanian businessman Nolan Foster in 1999 that Cayman did not decide to remain a ‘Dependency of Jamaica’.¹⁷¹ Signaling his continuity with Captain Kirkconnell’s traditional socio-political understanding of Jamaica, Mr. Foster also pays homage to Roy McTaggart – a Caymanian medical doctor and politician in the 1960s and 1970s – and his efforts to secure Cayman’s continued connection with Britain through petition: ‘...Dr. McTaggart...got credit for swinging [the votes our way]’, he begins:

[and] I could not see [us] remaining with Jamaica. At that time we had a preacher here publishing a little newssheet [sic] called the Cayman Brac Herald or something. I still have it a home somewhere. A little article I wrote in that about choosing between Jamaica and Crown Colony Status. I mean I gave my views. I told them plain and straight. I wanted to be clear, I had nothing against Jamaica, they had been good to us and all the rest of it but I

¹⁶⁹ See Anthony Woodburn, ‘Jamaica becoming a lawless country’, *Jamaica Gleaner*, <http://www.jamaica-gleaner.com/gleaner/20020210/focus/focus1.html>, February 10, 2002; May 15, 2009.

¹⁷⁰ Trevor Munroe, *Renewing Democracy into the Millennium: The Jamaican Experience in Perspective* (Kingston: University of the West Indies Press, 1999).

¹⁷¹ CINA, Interview with Nolan Foster, April 2, 1999, p.7.

felt that Jamaica would have enough problems of her own without having the burdens of these islands on her at that time.¹⁷²

Over 3,000 Caymanians signed their name to this petition, which called for Cayman to remain with Britain and not become a dependency of an independent Jamaica. Indeed, Dr. McTaggart was quick to assert in 1975 that the Cayman Islands would have been in a precarious position had Caymanians opted to remain a dependency of Jamaica. As a newly independent nation, Jamaica had to concern itself with matters of military security and economic survival, and for Dr. McTaggart, after the fact, it was indeed wise that Cayman had decided to remain under a long-established, stable Western nation.¹⁷³

Mr. Foster's reason in his 1999 interview for not wanting to remain with Jamaica finds echo in Dr. McTaggart's foregoing sentiment: '[The Jamaicans] haven't [even] got them [their burdens] ironed out yet!' Mr. Foster begins, '...and I realize this, too, that where we have plenty Jamaicans here now, if we had gone along with Jamaica it would have been wide open and they could have come in at will.' His interviewee, Heather McLaughlin, affirms her own concern as a Caymanian, confirming that 'Yes. Yes. And there'd be no control whatsoever.' Mr. Foster agrees: 'Be no control. And we would not have been the prosperous island that we are today.' 'No', Mrs.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, p.8.

¹⁷³ See footnote 12.

McLaughlin stresses.¹⁷⁴ What, then, is the connection between Cayman's prosperity and keeping large numbers of Jamaicans out of the Cayman Islands? The connection here, in light of Mr. Foster and Mrs. McLaughlin's expressions, seems to rest specifically in current interpretations of Jamaica as a crime-ridden and economically faltering country. By 2009, Jamaica's public debt stood at 131.7% of a gross domestic product of \$23.36 billion. In real-growth-rate terms, this meant that Jamaica's economic growth was in the negative at -4% that very year.¹⁷⁵ This economic reality was likely to prompt a further understanding of Jamaican existence: where economic opportunities are scarce, people tend to turn to a life of crime, continuing this life even when they are living abroad. This line of logic seems to drive Mr. Foster's and Mrs. McLaughlin's tenacious belief that too many Jamaicans in Cayman would destroy both Cayman's prosperity and its relatively crime-free, peaceful nature.

Mr. Hennings also begins to give voice to a reappropriated traditional interpretation of Jamaica and Jamaicans on ostensibly economic and social grounds. When his interviewer evokes an earlier, more honest time where 'you could go anywhere in Kingston and never think about locking your door or anything', Mr. Hennings's response seems not only to extend an earlier Jamaican/Caymanian binary, but potentially portrays present-day Jamaicans in a derogatory manner, as expressed by

¹⁷⁴ Interview with Nolan Foster, p.10.

¹⁷⁵ See CIA World Factbook: Jamaica, at <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/jm.html>, 2010; March 22, 2010.

his hesitancy: 'Oh, yes, you never...when I was a boy in Kingston...I was a little boy in Kingston, there was no people... well, the Jamaica people are still wonderful, I don't mean to imply in any way that there's anything wrong with the people...I mean the average person. There [is] a tremendous amount wrong with some of the people.'¹⁷⁶ These professed implications are rooted in the recent past and are contingent not only on Jamaica's current political, economic, and criminal condition, but the very social origins of this condition; we explore the latter below.

When Jamaica achieved independence in 1962, for a decade thereafter the nation was politically and economically stable under Bustamante's Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) leadership. As testament to Jamaica's potential economic and social success, Singapore sent officials during this time to analyze the island's strengthening economic and political infrastructures. Nonetheless, when Michael Manley's PNP came into power in 1972, Jamaica's stability began to falter. Pushing a brand of democratic socialism, Jamaica's newfangled relationship with Cuba especially met the disapproval of the United States. Anthony Payne has suggested this triangular relationship was the stimulant behind Jamaica's political and economic downfall: A displeased America had simply used its hegemonic clout as a bargaining chip; either Manley cut ties with Castro or the Jamaican economy, by then dependent on American and European "free" markets, would be systematically shut out. The

¹⁷⁶ Interview with Amy and Glair Hennings, p.23.

American ambassador to Jamaica at this time, Sumner Gerrard, 'pointedly told a group of Kingston businessmen that "allegations of US destabilization [were] scurrilous and false.'¹⁷⁷ Rather, Jamaica's escalating violence and economic decline by 1976 represented a number of factors, including the opposition of multinational bauxite companies in Jamaica to the production levy imposed by the PNP government in 1974; the corresponding economic pressures which the United States in turn placed on the Jamaican government for the imposition of such a levy; and Edward Seaga's desire to propel his JLP to power by attacking the socialist economic and "politically debilitating" vision of the PNP, a view that eventually brought both parties into armed conflict in 1976 and the resultant declaration of a state of emergency.¹⁷⁸

In light of Jamaica's declining social and political situation since the 1970s, Mr. Hennings's position that most Jamaicans are still good people "despite" the implied fact of Jamaica's perceived current lawless trajectory marks an ideological shift in traditional Caymanian understandings of Jamaica and Jamaicanness. Any such shift is benignly countenanced by Tenson Scott, who lived in Jamaica in the 1950s:

From what I knew of Jamaica...it was wonderful; really good to be in Jamaica...back in those days...knowing what has happened with their politics...The trouble is with...their politics, the way their people is [sic] doing

¹⁷⁷ Payne, *Politics in Jamaica*, p.50.

¹⁷⁸ Carl Stone, *The Political Opinion of the Jamaican People, 1976-1981* (Kingston: Blackett Publishers, 1982), chapter 1.

the island. I had found it to be a wonderful place up here, you could get such nice things. We were treated fairly and very good[:] [for instance,] [m]y brother would leave home for hours in the daytime... [and we didn't think] he was dead or nothing [sic]...[It would a] different thing [now] if he was missing for so much [sic] hours in Jamaica.¹⁷⁹

As established, experienced Caymanians, Mr. Scott and Mr. Hennings and the remaining respondents that I have recently cited, have set the traditional groundwork for any resultant Caymanian xenophobia as specifically expressed towards Jamaicans. Where xenophobia can be conceptually understood as an intense national-institutional dislike for foreign nationals and their incoming, inundating way of life, reworked Caymanian traditional understandings of Jamaica and Jamaicans possess a potential xenophobic intent.¹⁸⁰ Indeed, Caymanian ideas of belonging are necessarily undergirded, in traditional terms especially, by participation and emotion: participation in a historically derived way of life with its own customs and behaviours is ultimately indebted to a concomitant, guiding emotion of belonging.¹⁸¹ Earlier respondents used in this section, such as Miss Tooksie and Deal Ebanks, have revealed the emotional timbre of historical acts and circumstances. Thus for Miss Tooksie, the normal act of walking and/or running to

¹⁷⁹ Interview with Tenson Scott, p.7.

¹⁸⁰ For comprehensive understandings of xenophobia, see, for instance, Francis Nyamnjoh, *Insiders and Outsiders: Citizenship and Xenophobia in Contemporary Southern Africa* (London: Zed Books, 2006); Rosana Barbosa, *Immigration and Xenophobia: Portuguese Immigrants in Early 19th Century Rio de Janeiro* (Lanham, Maryland: University Press of America, 2009).

¹⁸¹ Cf. Ray Taras, *Europe Old and New: Transnationalism, Belonging, Xenophobia* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2009), introduction.

school as a child represented a legitimate social, mundane actuality of historical Caymanian society, an actuality that, in its very simplicity, confirms ideas of a traditional-historical Caymanian way of life. Similarly, Mr. Ebanks's recollection of conch horn blowing evokes a historical act of Caymanian seafaring culture. In emotive terms, both acts constitute historical Caymanian customs and behaviours, and any emotional attachment to them is directly related to their historical – legitimate – Caymanian worth. In this sense, traditional ideas that betray emotions of national and cultural belonging ultimately speak to the Caymanian ancestors' participation in, and contribution to, the shaping of a cultural way of life.

As simple and mundane as many of the recollections and mediations throughout this section have appeared on the surface, they are in the process of social construction; they foreshadow an ontological reality, where ontology denotes a way of being based on perceived ideas and understandings of truth.¹⁸² Whether it is Miss Tooksie's or Mrs. Bodden's account of aspects of their childhood growing up in Cayman, Mr. Hennings's shifting understanding of Jamaica or Jamaicans, or Nolan Foster's potential xenophobic understandings of Jamaicans, these retellings count for them as truth. Trenton Merricks asserts that '[w]hen a statement is true, there is, *of course*, a state of affairs which make it true.'¹⁸³ Even if a statement is *perceived* to be true, it would still be guided, equally, by perceptions of an actual state of affairs.

¹⁸² Ruth E. Ray, *Beyond Nostalgia: Ageing and Life-Story Writing* (Charlottesville, Virginia: University of Virginia Press, 2000), p.26.

¹⁸³ Trenton Merricks, *Truth and Ontology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), chapter 1.

Indeed, I concur with Peter van Inwagen that the act of being – or existing – is an activity whose meaning accrues in the cognitive realms, which in turn selectively develops ideas of truth from lies.¹⁸⁴ In the case of the foregoing, any such selectivity speaks to an emotional investment in a historical-cultural way of life.

Thus it is the emotion of belonging, based on cultural-emotional participation and sustenance, which drives the reworked traditional ideas of Jamaica and Jamaican-*ness*. Indeed, the traditional culture of Caymanians was never perceived to be at risk in the years leading up to 1962; with a weak economy and political dynamic, foreign nationals were not likely to have wanted to come to Cayman in search of a better life to 1962. It was for this reason that Caymanian xenophobic thought was perhaps nonexistent during the first four decades of the twentieth century; possessing a decidedly insular and unassuming way of life during this time, Caymanians, both at home and abroad, would not have been concerned with “getting the foreigners out,” but with their economic survival.

Yet with the economic miracle of the 1970s (to be fully discussed in Section 4), Cayman’s economy was able to make the transition from a decidedly closed one to a vibrant, prosperous one dependent on the forces of globalisation. As one of the enabling features of globalisation involves the governmental sanctioning of large

¹⁸⁴ Peter van Inwagen, *Ontology, Identity, and Modality: Essays in Metaphysics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001, 1st edition), p.14.

numbers of incoming immigrant workers, a certain brand of Caymanian traditional thought especially would be keen to keep Cayman's history and traditions alive in the midst of a rampant multiculturalism. Therefore, reworked understandings of Jamaicans come substantively from the fact that Jamaicans at present represent the largest immigrant group in Cayman, and together with their perceived aggressiveness and criminality – based, for my recent respondents, in large part on Jamaica's social and political circumstances – many Caymanians are devoted to expressing their concern about the preponderance of Jamaicans in their society. Although Caymanians like Mr. Scott and Mr. Hennings have striven for political correctness by contrasting the wonderful Jamaica of old with its unstable, violent present, the latter half of their contrast seem to support the more potentially xenophobic and one-sided expressions of Nolan Foster and his interviewer. Therefore, when Mr. Foster affirms that too many of "them" Jamaicans would have been able to enter Cayman at will had Cayman decided to remain with Jamaica, his affirmation resonates with Mr. Henning's understanding that Jamaica's current plight is directly relatable to the actions of "some" of its people. Similarly, when Mr. Foster's interviewer asserts that there would have been no control had Jamaicans been allowed to freely enter Cayman, her words find easy association in Mr. Scott's own reworked thoughts of Jamaica as a currently dangerous place, which in turn is directly relatable to some *Jamaicans* being dangerous and lacking social control. Yet in light of the fact that the same year in which Mr. Foster's interview had been

conducted many Jamaicans were in Cayman, to what extent was his interviewer stressing *what could be* as opposed to *what is*? The latter question helps drive the intention of the following and final section.

In conclusion, Jamaica might have been relatively stable by its independence, but some Caymanians in the present are breathing a sigh of relief that Ormond Panton's countenance of post-independence Jamaican politics did not lead the Cayman Islands to ultimately sever ties with Great Britain. The words of my most recent respondents suggest that had Cayman remained with Jamaica, the former would have been in the same social, political, and economic state. Beyond this, the expressions of, for instance, Mr. Foster work to evoke a new, reappropriated us/them binary of an essentially derogatory nature: the fact that "they" would be allowed to come in to Cayman freely had Cayman remained with Jamaica introduces the vibrant internalized Caymanian sense of self. For all intents and purposes, this self is not what the Jamaican self has become, that is, economically backward, murderous, and politically corrupt; when Mr. Foster exclaims that the Jamaicans have not been able to sort out their problems since independence, he is implying these very elements, while further implying that Caymanians do not have such problems as especially revealed in the Caymanians' prosperity and internal political stability. However, this derogatory binary speaks to more than just issues of social, political, and economic difference between Jamaicans and Caymanians, but pinpoints the

parameters of the latter's traditional sense of national identity in relation to the former, in perceptual terms. When I speak of traditional national identity, I am speaking of the coalescence of multiple Caymanian identities – based on the localized historical forces of family, territory, gender, ethnicity, religion, and social class – into one coherent identity as this identity nationalizes in its interaction with external identities and forces.¹⁸⁵ Therefore, when Mr. Foster confirms the likely negative effects of too many Jamaicans in Cayman, and his interviewer subsequently states one such negative effect would be the Caymanians' loss of identity, both respondents are confirming their traditionalist stance where traditionalism can mourn the loss or potential loss of a way of life due to potentially inundating incoming forces. Based on the historical bases of the multiple identities that combine to constitute a national identity, we should appreciate the enduring ways in which such traditionalists would be quick to express the inviolability of home and its established inhabitants in the making and sustaining of a unique national identity. Yet Mr. Foster, Heather McLaughlin, Mr. Hennings, and Mr. Scott have also begun to demonstrate, in varying degrees, that this sense of Caymanianness needs a lesser "other" if it is to continue to accumulate essences of legitimacy, superiority, and/or singularity. Any such Caymanian understanding of its loss of identity premised on a way of life originating from historical circumstance, conforms to Craton's interpretation of a singular Caymanian nationalist stance perhaps in place by the

¹⁸⁵ See Anthony Smith, *National Identity* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1993), chapter 4.

1970s, as this illuminated the '[Caymanian] fear of being dominated by a Jamaica whose standard of living was rapidly falling behind that of the three Cayman Islands, and whose population was a hundred times larger and [generally impoverished]'.¹⁸⁶

Postscript

Caymanians who are likely to invoke the past in their present multicultural circumstance cannot do so in temporal and cultural isolation, as if they had just momentarily decided that it was in their best national and cultural interest to do so. They do so because their mother or great grandfather did it; they do it because at some time in their lives they were able to reify (or make real) what their recent ancestors – or they themselves – said, however vaguely, about the indispensability of the Caymanian past as a guide in a modern Caymanian present often perceived to be fragmented and nationally un-unified. With this in mind, the section that follows introduces and expounds the effects of modernity, multiculturalism, and globalisation on the Cayman Islands from the 1970s. These effects, it will be argued, led to the creation of a new modern Caymanian cultural sensibility, which in many ways prove incompatible with its steadfast “traditionalist”¹⁸⁷ equivalent.

¹⁸⁶ Craton, *Founded*, p.316.

¹⁸⁷ See pp. 16-18 with regard to my understanding of the modern sensibility which underpins traditionalist rhetoric

SECTION 4 TRADITIONALISM AND MODERN THINKING: DETERMINING THE EXTENT OF THE CULTURAL RIFT IN THE CAYMANIAN IMAGINATION

The concept of culture, I espouse...is essentially a semiotic one. Believing, with Max Weber, that man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun, I take culture to be those webs, and the analysis of it therefore not an experimental science in search of law but an interpretive one in search of meaning (Geertz 1973, p.5).

4.1 Opening Arguments

With only one international bank by 1953 (Barclays), by 1972 the Cayman Islands had indeed made the dramatic transition from “the islands that time forgot” to a recognized offshore financial centre and premiere tourist destination.¹ Such a transition had its logic. Since 1959, full adult suffrage on the basis of limited internal self-rule had been granted by Great Britain; this led to the introduction of a reduced 18-member Legislative Assembly – 12 elected, 3 nominated, and 3 appointed – and a new constitution that largely exempted the Cayman Islands from the control of the Jamaican legislature.² Although a British Commissioner – later referred to as governor – remained in control, elected Caymanian leaders were in a far more advantageous position to influence any internal legislation which Great Britain would have likely supported at the time. Thus by the 1970s, off-shore financiers

¹ Michael Craton, *Founded Upon the Seas: A History of the Cayman Islands and Their People* (Kingston: Ian Randle Publishers, 2003), pp. 352-3. See also J.A. Roy Bodden, *The Cayman Islands in Transition: The Politics, History, and Sociology of a Changing Society* (Kingston: Ian Randle Publishers, 2007), chapter 4.

² Craton, *Founded*, p.310.

were keen to invest in Cayman's economy due in large part to the absence of direct taxation. Caymanians like Sir Vassel Johnson and James Bodden are largely credited as the men who helped make Cayman's economy successful. As Financial Secretary from 1965 to 1982, for instance, Sir Vassel was responsible for supporting and helping to pass financial legislation that focussed on encouraging offshore investors without the worry of having to pay any taxes on their investments and profits.³ It was, for instance, under his financial leadership and foresight that the Banks and Trust Regulation Law of 1966 came into effect. Although this law was responsible for licensing and regulating local and incoming offshore business, it was especially created to encourage the latter type of businesses, making it exceedingly easy for offshore investors to set up "[s]uitcase" companies which required less office space and fewer local employees.⁴ Similarly, elected to the Legislative Assembly in 1972, James Bodden is widely regarded, posthumously, as a 'visionary who helped to politically lead [the] Cayman [Islands] into an era of progress through modernization.'⁵ As such, he was made a national hero in 1994, six years after his death in 1988. Instrumental in the creation of Cayman Airways, the national flag carrier of the Cayman Islands, and the major terminal extension of Grand Cayman's Owen Roberts International Airport in the 1970s, James Bodden's desire for a

³ See especially, Sir Vassel Johnson, *As I See It: How Cayman Became a Leading Financial Centre* (Sussex: The Book Guild, 2001).

⁴ Craton, *Founded*, p.353.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p.410

prosperous and successful Cayman Islands was strongly felt during his double term as Tourism Minister from 1976 to 1984.⁶

Tourism also exponentially increased during the 1970s – in many ways becoming more important to Cayman’s economy than offshore finance, and at present it accounts for 70% of gross domestic product and 75% of foreign currency earnings.⁷ Given the absence of monthly tourism statistics before 1995, it is nonetheless worth assessing the reasons behind the substantial increase in tourist numbers to the Cayman Islands from 1972. The year 1972 marked the initial success of an unprecedented dividend yielded by the external promotion of tourism in the Cayman Islands, and it was in this year that the number of tourists to the islands had uncharacteristically risen by 25.8% from the previous year; in statistical terms this increase totaled 30,600 tourists that arrived by air, compared with the 24,400 tourists that had visited the islands the previous year.⁸ The Cayman Islands government’s awareness of the potential windfall of tourism at this time was enshrined in the new constitution of 1965, which placed the direction of [tourism] development under the

⁶ See especially Bodden, *The Cayman Islands*, chapter three. For more information on James Bodden, see, Ministry of Education, Training, Employment, Youth, Sports and Culture, *National Heroes Day 2008*, http://www.brighterfutures.gov.ky/portal/page?_pageid=1408,1866195&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL, 2008; April 27, 2009.

⁷ Calculations based on statistical information found at, ESO, ‘Statistical Compendium, 2008’, at <http://www.eso.ky/docum1/docum87.pdf>, 2010; March 2, 2010.

⁸ Tourism Department, *Compendium of Statistics, 1998* (George Town: Cayman Islands Government, 1998), p.104.

purview of the Executive Council.⁹ Nine years later in 1974, a Tourism Law was passed, and the Department of Tourism was created, replacing the Tourist Board, which had been established in 1966.

Any significant rise in tourism by 1972 also seemed the result of the collaboration between the private and public sectors forged in the previous decade. The first private association dedicated to the promotion and development of the Cayman brand of tourism was the Hotel Association, which was established in 1964. The Hotel Association was very small, consisting of only 12 hotels, the biggest and oldest one – The Galleon Beach Hotel – able only to accommodate 84 guests.¹⁰ Since its inception, the Hotel Association had the government's support to promote a brand of tourism that focussed on swimming, scuba diving, and sunbathing, or, as historian Michael Craton put it, 'the middle and "high end" segments of the tourist market.' By 1966 the Cayman Islands government had taken a more proactive approach with the promotion of its islands as ultimate Caribbean getaways; indeed, it was the newly established Hotel Association that 'persuaded the government to set up a Tourist Board.' Voluntarily chaired by Hotel Association member and expatriate Eric Bergstrom, the transitory Tourist Board was engaged in local

⁹ In the British Dependent Cayman Islands, the Executive Council normally refers to the appointed positions of the Chief Secretary, Financial Secretary and Attorney General, in addition to five elected members selected from the 15 representatives of the Legislative Assembly.

¹⁰ Craton, *Founded*, pp. 347-348.

advertising, having received its funding from local businesses, from supermarkets to convenience stores to scuba diving companies.¹¹

In 1969, Warren Connolly was appointed Member responsible for Tourism, and proceeded to develop Cayman's tourist product. Realizing the need 'for government subsidies for advertisement and promotion', Connolly was able to secure a relatively small budget from the government, which in turn led to the establishment of Cayman's first overseas tourism office in Miami.¹² Four more overseas tourism offices would be established by the 1980s, in New York, Toronto, Houston, and London. Nonetheless, when the government's Executive Council decided to take firmer control of the islands' existing tourist venture in 1972, a Cayman brand of tourism based on sea, sun, and sand was being vigorously promoted, resulting in an unprecedented increase in the number of tourist air arrivals by the end of that year (see p. 246). Between 1973 and 1976, tourist air arrivals had jumped from 45,800 to 64,900, or 87.2%.¹³ Marketing efforts by the Department of Tourism had begun in earnest. Thus in 1976, when Connolly was replaced by James Bodden, who himself sought to build upon the numerical and conceptual successes of the islands' tourism venture, '[t]ourism and all other forms of development were interconnected', writes

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p.348.

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ Tourism Department, 'Compendium of Statistics', 1998 (George Town: Cayman Islands Government, 1998), p. 104.

Craton, 'and [James Bodden] was a tireless advocate of the right marriage between public and private sectors.'¹⁴

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Economic development was responsible for a dramatic increase in the Caymanians' standard of living. As more revenue comes in, government expenditures are likely to grow larger and more elaborate, public and private sector salaries are likely to increase, and thus new and more expensive tastes develop. In succinct terms, we may say here that Cayman's economy (and by extension, Caymanians) has benefited from the economic forces of globalisation with its emphasis on vast amounts of incoming – fluid – capital.¹⁵ This benefit has not only been manifested in Cayman's growing economy – growing, for instance, by as much as 6.5% in the 2005 financial year, although decreasing to a still noticeably healthy 4.6% the following financial year¹⁶ – but corresponds to 'a complex array of contemporary social changes', which are fundamentally undergirded by a raised standard of living.¹⁷ In this sense, B. Kumaravadivelu would argue, culture and traditional notions of culture seem – from the onset of globalisation – destined to be at odds with such social changes that would be largely attributable to other incoming conflicting cultural ways.¹⁸ As I

¹⁴ Craton, *Founded*, p.349.

¹⁵ K. Anthony Appiah, 'Citizens of the World', in *Globalizing Rights: The Oxford Amnesty Lectures 1999*, edited by Matthew J. Gibney (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), p.192.

¹⁶ See ESO, Statistical Compendium, 2008, <http://www.eso.ky/docum1/docum85.pdf>, 2010; April 5, 2010.

¹⁷ Larry Ray, *Globalization and Everyday Life* (London: Routledge, 2007), p.15.

¹⁸ B. Kumaravadivelu, *Cultural Globalization and Language Education* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), pp. 15-19.

attempt to illuminate the ways in which established Caymanians betray a contradicted cultural logic with regard to notions of traditionalism and a modernism spawned of globalisation and its first cousin, multiculturalism, let us first consider the economic-cultural logic that seems to drive modern thought.

Paul Hopper would argue that the cultural logic borne specifically of globalisation is not essentially concerned with any national past and its enduring traditions.¹⁹ With traditional ideas of Caymanianness firmly in mind (see Section 3), this concern necessarily expresses the transition from traditional-mindedness to consumer-mindedness. By *consumer-mindedness*, I am referring to the Frankfurt School's cultural concept of consumerism, which deserves some explanation: '...Consumption [serves] the interests of manufacturers seeking greater profits, and citizens [become] the passive victims of advertisement. Processes of standardization, [are] accompanied by the development of a materialistic culture, in which commodities [come] to lack authenticity and instead merely [meet] "false" needs.'²⁰ Implicating consumer-mindedness, consumerism thus refers to the consumer's willing, indeed obsessive, need to participate in the purchase of various desirable goods and services either for personal comfort or as markers of prosperity. Such needs, in my opinion, are "traditionally false" from the outset when considered in the context of cultural materialism. When Raymond Williams invokes the culture of

¹⁹ Paul Hopper, *Understanding Cultural Globalization* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2007), introduction.

²⁰ Conrad Lodziak, *The Myth of Consumerism* (London: Pluto Press, 2002), p.11.

materialism, he is essentially referring to the interplay between economics and ideology, the ways of thinking and doing that, in my opinion, result, in the Caymanian context, from the irresistible forces of consumerism within a national space with its own preconceived ideas and conditions of culture.²¹ In other words, the often wanton desire to purchase material things is premised on an economic logic with its emphasis on “living the good life,” and this is antithetical to traditional thought with its emphasis on the lamentation of the glorious, bare Caymanian past (see Section 3.2.2). It is worth briefly exploring the logic of cultural materialism in the context of the Cayman Islands.

‘No one travels as often as we [Caymanians] do’, an informant said to me. ‘Why do we travel so much?’ I in turn asked? ‘Because we have too much money and time on our hands!’ was her reply.²² Indeed, as a Caymanian myself, I can confirm that many Caymanians are likely go to Florida, notably Miami, on the weekend – any weekend – for the primary purpose of shopping. ‘Things are cheaper there’, another informant confirms, ‘and, so, if you need new clothes, or certain equipment, Miami is the best place [to go to].’²³ I was almost tempted to ask this informant whether the money used to purchase a round trip ticket to Miami – costing anywhere from US \$300 to US \$400 (up to KYD \$325) for a weekend trip – could not have been more

²¹ Cf. Raymond Williams, *Culture and Materialism* (London: Verso Books, 2005), pp.35-40.

²² Personal Interview with Anonymous Interviewee 1, May 8, 2007, p.12.

²³ Personal Interview with Anonymous Interviewee 2, May 9, 2007, p.4.

meaningfully used to buy what was needed here in Cayman; but, I suspect she would have responded by stressing that clothes and other items are cheaper and more varied in Miami, and so the price of a round trip ticket would have been necessary to gain access to these markets.

Percival "Will" Jackson begins to map the logical process behind this newfangled Caymanian philosophy premised on prosperity:

As we enter this new century, we already see modern and more classic technologies in high gear and dominating society. Everything surrounding life's sustenance has to do with electrical power in one way or another. For example, the old wood-burning caboose by which process the food was cooked and even the woodstoves have now been totally obliterated by electric and gas ranges even in the very poorest of families. Just turn a knob or flip a switch and cooking is in progress.

Refrigerators and freezers are no longer luxuries, but standard equipment in every home. Washing machines find a special spot in every residence; and so do televisions, usually two to three sets at a time. Motor-cars have replaced the horses in yards where once two or three horses grazed awaiting the use of family members for travelling. They have disappeared and in their places are two to three or even four family cars.

This is only a brief look at the type of high living that the new century offers against that which the early 20th Century even promised.

Nevertheless, the years did change things beyond comprehension for the Islanders.²⁴

Mr. Jackson's assessment of the many conveniences that accompany a prosperous Caymanian way of life clearly delineates the Cayman past from its present. Where the average annual income was roughly US \$7,000 in the 1960s, by 2005, the average Cayman household could boast an income of KYD \$43,800, or more, per annum (or, over US \$67,000).²⁵ Explicit in Mr. Jackson's assessment is the idea that Caymanian society has indeed made the transition from the bare, utilitarian past to an abundantly opulent present. Instantiating the Frankfurt School's foregoing line of thought (see p. 250), he clearly shows how modern amenities have become standard in a Caymanian way of life known globally for its high standard of living. Excessive motorcars per household, together with washing machines, dryers, and central air conditioning are but a few of the modern amenities that the modern Caymanian lifestyle boasts and which Caymanians seem to have taken for granted. The twentieth-century promise, as Mr. Jackson puts it, seems to be premised on the ways in which material articles act not only as indicators of wealth, but become standardised to a way of life indebted to the forces of globalisation. Yet how is the consciousness behind these forces poised to manifest itself? Indeed, the expressions

²⁴ Percival Will Jackson, 'A Breach of Protocol?' in *Cayman Net News*, at http://www.caymannetnews.com/Archive/Archive%20Articles/January%202001/Issue%2048/Walking_back.html, January, 2001; April 20, 2010.

²⁵ See ESO, 'National Income: 1998-2008', at <http://www.eso.ky/docum1/docum101.pdf>, 2010; April 21, 2010.

of my two recent informants, in the initial analysis, find their interpretation within the parameters of a cultural materialism; in other words, these informants are demonstrating a consciousness propelled by an economic philosophy centered on experience and meaning: where Caymanianness asks the automatic question, “what does it mean to be Caymanian?”, these informants’ responses are based on their “prosperity experiences” and the ways in which these experiences give meaning to their Caymanian selves.²⁶ Just as past experiences accrue meaning for the traditional-minded Caymanian, experiences created by globalisation accrue meanings that assume cultural importance in the mind of the prosperity-driven Caymanian, keeping in mind that any such cultural importance can be defined as the acquired yet enduring behavioural patterns of a group of people.

Recognizing that many Caymanians are keen to enjoy a prosperous life that comes as a result of globalisation, we should anticipate the inevitable fracture between traditional Caymanian thought and its more modern counterpart, which largely depends on ideas not only indebted to the culture of materialism but also to “living in the here and now” and not the relatively distant past. I continue to explore modern Caymanian thought in the subsections that follow, but on the surface we begin to realize that the modern emphasis on living prosperously and perhaps wantonly will be at odds with a more traditionalist viewpoint keen to uphold the

²⁶ Cf. Mark Olssen, *Michel Foucault: Materialism and Education* (Westport: Paradigm Publishers, 2006), chapter 1.

unassuming past. Yet *below* the surface looms an awareness that is inclined to question the extent to which traditionalists can uphold the unassuming past as active participants in globalisation themselves. This potential contradiction is not only played out in the financial sphere, but is also bound to manifest itself within the parameters of another of globalisation's driving forces, that of multiculturalism. By multiculturalism I am referring to the cultural-cum-ideological stance taken by many nationals working in foreign countries: their view of 'assimilation or acculturation [to the host culture] as a violation of the integrity or dignity of the individual, whose cultural habits should be recognized fully as an integral element of the person's identity.'²⁷ Given, then, the potential conflict between Caymanian traditionalists, on the one hand, and Caymanians more modern in their thinking, together with incoming nationals keen to continue – even impose – their way of life, on the other, the assessments that follow seek to question the extent to which traditionalist Caymanian sentiment continues to influence a decidedly modern Caymanian way of life.

²⁷ Alain G-Gagnon and Raffaele Iacovino, 'Interculturalism: expanding the boundaries of citizenship', in *Democracy, Nationalism and Multiculturalism*, edited by Ramon Maiz and Ferran Requejo (New York: Frank Cass Publishers, 2005), p.26.

4.2 Rhetoric and Caymanian Culture: Modern-Thinking Caymanians versus Traditionalist Caymanians

Culture is a term that needs considerable unpacking in any national context if we are to truly understand and appreciate its effects on how a society feels about itself. Such effects are especially illuminated when the national in question attempts to explain his or her culture. One Caymanian, for instance, describes the culture of her people in terms of their possession of 'distinctive characteristics', e.g. 'Caymanians don't like to make a fuss or show off'; 'they love their cars with a passion'; 'they stay away from public conflict'; '...they have a strong connection to nature and God'; 'they have a sense of humour'; [and] they are talkative and friendly.'¹ Given her positive assertions, she might have very well been one of the two thousand Caymanians who contributed to the national list of beliefs, completed in 1998, and which include: 'We Believe: In God and traditional Christian values; That all people have a responsibility to contribute to the good of the community; In the importance of a strong family unit', etc.² It is safe to say that such beliefs and characteristics, independently or together, can be quite universal in their appeal and are therefore not specific to Caymanians and Caymanianness; yet as I demonstrated in Section 3, customs and beliefs specific to Caymanianness 'become, for [Caymanians],

¹ Anonymous, 'The Caymanian Culture: Good Life', *The Caymanian Compass*, at <http://www.caycompass.com/cgi-bin/CFPnews.cgi?ID=1024216>, August 9, 2007; September 9, 2007.

² Craton, *Founded*, 417; see also, Cayman Islands Government, *Vision 2008: The Cayman Islands National Strategic Plan, 1999-2008* (George Town: Vision 2008 Secretariat, 1999); Cayman Islands Government, *Vision 2008: Working Together to Shape our Future* (George Town: Vision 2008 Secretariat, 1999).

endemically Caymanian regardless of any similar customs [and beliefs] practiced elsewhere.’³

It is at this point worth asking how was it that the above-mentioned Caymanian was able to arrive at these perceived overarching and pervasive Caymanian cultural characteristics, apart from the fact that much of her cultural understandings would have also been passed down through the generations on an experiential basis; and, more importantly, how strong a factor does positive subjectivity play here? When, for instance, she states clearly and certainly that Caymanians do not like to make a fuss or show off, this has consistently been countered by intimations of 60 foreign nationals in the islands – 30 North Americans including Canadians, and 30 Jamaicans – who were given questionnaires to fill out; 84% of them were inclined towards the view that ‘Caymanians are an entitled and proud set of people who only think of themselves’, a response which, to be sure, would fundamentally impugn the official national belief which sanctions ‘[t]hat the respect for Caymanian and non-Caymanian is important for social harmony.’⁴ So too is the cultural certainty of the Caymanian’s warmth and friendliness offset by the distinct “outsider” understanding that Caymanians are selectively xenophobic and even racist; 74% of the foreign nationals questioned agreed that many Caymanians either do not like

³ See Section 3.2.4, pp.211-212.

⁴ *Ibid.*

foreigners or are racist.⁵ Expatriate businessman Trevor Davies provides a prevalent – if harsh – understanding regarding the Caymanians’ profession of friendliness and the foreign nationals’ scoff at it: ‘When will you [Caymanians] stop trotting out the pat answer, “we are the most friendly people in the world”, in response to any criticism of Cayman’s attitude to foreign residents? Furthermore, to suggest expats came to Cayman because of its people is laughable. They came for various reasons, but none came because of that. And no, Caymanians are not particularly friendly. Ask any expatriate in confidence, not in public, and see what they say. They smile for...[the Cayman] dollar...’⁶ Although this study does not assess the sentiments of foreign nationals, the foregoing statistics and their potentially attendant point(s) of view begins to impugn any positive and putative traditionalist self understandings of Caymanians. Indeed, where culture can be defined as the whole way of life based on the common experiences of a group of people,⁷ we begin to realize that such a definition, in perceptive outsider terms, may not be as unitary as the established Caymanian would like to think; to go a step further, we should also ask ourselves at this juncture just how common the foregoing beliefs and characteristics are if Caymanians are *themselves* torn between traditional thinking and thinking more modern in its orientation.

⁵ Based on the responses of twenty Jamaicans and fifteen North Americans who took a questionnaire entitled ‘what makes an expatriate living in Cayman.’ See appendix B.

⁶ Trevor Davies, ‘Letter to the Editor: In defense of Gordon Barlow Editor’s note – Response to Gordon Barlow’s letter’, in *Cayman Net News*, at <http://www.caymannetnews.com/Archive/Archive%20Articles/December%202000/Issue%2037%2038/Issue%2037/Letter6.html>, December, 2000 (archives); April 14, 2010.

⁷ See Section 1, pp. 9-10.

Thus in the continued effort to unpack any cultural language that has been paraded around the Cayman Islands, the words of Caymanian Brent Mclean seem to point us in a general direction: 'Time [in Cayman]...used to be hard but we have made it a wonderful place for our children to grow up and if we continue to allow people to come from outside and dictate to us, and segregate us in our homeland, then very soon we will have nothing proud to leave behind for our future generations.'⁸ Apart from implying the presence of xenophobic foreboding upon a sort of Caymanian nationalist sentiment, Mr. McLean's expressions, together with the expressions of the anonymous Caymanian just dealt with, constitute a system of knowledge shaped and created on Cayman soil, and covering an array of abstract understandings specifying national values, beliefs, and experiences. Indeed, the expressions of the anonymous Caymanian earlier dealt with establish a decidedly reflexive Caymanian perception of the Caymanians' distinctive characteristics; these characteristics can in turn be infused with a historical-symbolic worth in line with Mr. McLean's implication that any authentic sense of Caymanianness has its basis in a history forged solely by the Caymanian people. Therefore, by highlighting a very possible link between understandings of authentic Caymanianness in the present and the past, together with the inherent differences between Caymanian and foreign national, Mr. McLean's affirmation that Caymanians have become isolated by

⁸ Brent McLean, 'Segregation Alive in the Cayman Islands', in the *Caymanian Compass*, at <http://www.caycompass.com/cgi-bin/CFPnews.cgi?ID=1022059>, May 9, 2007; November 4, 2008.

“others” in their own land should be placed within a specific cultural understanding from which traditionalist overtones emanate; herein lies the rationale for a Caymanian cultural expression shorn between the way things were and still should be, as opposed to the way things are and ought to be.

Towards the clarification of Caymanian culture as distinctly torn between two ideological forces that are both dependent on modernity, however much the Caymanian may invoke a sense of history in her understanding of herself as a cultural being, this is automatically challenged by the presence of another Caymanian actuality substantiated upon a profuse materiality and compellingly substantiated in the relative ease with which Caymanians, among the wealthiest nationalities in the world, are able to acquire material possessions.⁹ A temporal-ideological cultural divide of this nature is nothing new throughout the modern world, yet we should appreciate that its underlying effect defies any linear cultural link between the past and the present as it, in this case, critically challenges any potentially xenophobic traditional cultural Caymanian understanding.

In the first instance, the present performative nature of Caymanian heritage remembrance through various cultural events should necessarily raise questions as to the local currency of Rex Nettleford’s well-known argument that the “real”

⁹ See Section 4.1.

Caribbean culture continuum will always, through its human constituents, demonstrate a historically derived thematic of solidarity.¹⁰ Yet if notions of culture are expanded beyond the accurate, if limited, idea that creole Caribbean culture developed largely as a defense mechanism to white domination, the unity of the Caribbean's cultural continuum immediately appears to be in doubt. For instance, we need only glance back to the era of slavery, when even the slaves' allegiances were divided on the basis of skin shade and occupation, a division which worked to undermine any united enslaved cultural front.¹¹ In a similar, if more nationally specific modern way, the very cultural performativity of, say, demonstrating the silver palm thatching technique or the "Caymanian way" of building catboats or turtle-fishing within a materialistic society automatically brings into focus an ideological cultural Caymanian division between the unassuming, glorious past, and a worldly, materialistically present.

I am therefore at this point inclined to take seriously the Caymanian who said that '[all] this [talk of] Cayman [having] no culture [is] a lot of nonsense.'¹² The understanding of the Caymanian as culturally bankrupt has especially been shaped by Cayman's present condition both as a major financial centre and as a tiny country

¹⁰ For a thorough understanding of this concept, see Rex Nettleford, 'Definition and Development: The Need for Caribbean Creativity', in the *Caribbean Review* (issue 14, vol. 3, 1985), pp. 6-10.

¹¹ For especially illuminating ideas on the ways in which some slaves viewed themselves as superior to others, see Franklin Knight, *The Caribbean: Genesis of a Fragmented Nationalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), chapter 5.

¹² See footnote 2.

where Caymanians represent just about half of the islands' entire population of almost 65,000, the other incoming half having brought with them their more infectious and established cultural sensibilities.¹³ It is therefore not difficult to see how Cayman's present culturally pluralistic social dynamic may be said to provide the cultural rationale for that society, thereby precipitating the dilution of a traditionally inclined cultural body of knowledge. The recently quoted words of Mr. McLean that Caymanians have made Cayman the successful place that it is take on profound cultural significance at this point, buttressed by his ostensibly *necessary* ignorance that the hard way of life of which he speaks was due to the fact that Cayman's economy was once closed and paltry – based fundamentally on remittances from overseas Caymanian seamen – and that its economy did not truly begin to open up and expand until that very foreign element made its way into the islands in the 1970s, the decade that signaled the beginning of Cayman's success as a premier financial center and tourist destination.¹⁴ Thus because it is difficult to attach a singular or truly pervasive cultural symbol to Caymanianness unlike, say, Jamaica with its numerous historical-cultural icons, vibrant reggae, and ways of talking, doing, and being – or even Britain, which is often culturally recognized in 'certain strong individuals who stand for single aspects of Britain [like] Florence Nightingale...the Queen Mother...Winston Churchill...Lord Kitchener [and the

¹³ According to a newspaper article, as of early 2008 there are 32,367 Caymanians in a population 'approaching 65,000.' See Brent Fuller, 'Cayman's Population tops 60,000,' *The Caymanian Compass*, <http://www.caycompass.com/cgi-bin/CFPnews.cgi?ID=1032528>, August 3, 2008; January 1, 2009.

¹⁴ See Section 4.1.

like]’,¹⁵ a desperate myth must be seen as playing an important part in Caymanian traditional thought; this Caymanian mythical motif essentially defines the traditionalist Caymanian imperative to mute the importance of foreign nationals to Cayman’s economy so as to further legitimize, respectively, the ethnic and cultural indispensability of Caymanians and Caymanianness in the face of the multicultural “chaos” in the present.¹⁶ Yet “authentic” culture and idealistic notions of it cannot be solely viewed through the past and its traditions; instead, we should anticipate the dilative nature of culture where the “profane,” anti-historical present becomes just as important as the “sacred,” “homogenous” past in the attempt to define a cultural way of life and its competing viewpoints.

As we strive to distinguish modern Caymanian sentiment from a traditionalist equivalent, let us consider the following Caymanian opinion with regard to the foreign national in Cayman:

Give our people a chance and let them proceed themselves. If they mess up, it is their country. Every other country is already messed up. Why come here and try to destroy ours by being dictators?

I am against expatriates coming to the country on a [work] contract for whatever time frame is given to them and being given another contract. They should not be given another contract to remain in this country regardless of

¹⁵ Mike Storry *et al.*, *British Cultural Identities* (London: Routledge, 1997, 3rd edition), p.18.

¹⁶ Cf. Karen Armstrong, *A Short History of Myth* (Edinburgh: Canongate, 2005), p.2.

how good they prove themselves to be.

Then we will not end up in this mess that we are in today. There are many more places in the world, so go elsewhere.¹⁷

A decidedly xenophobic intent drives this traditional Caymanian entreaty – indeed, this entreaty is necessarily traditional because it can be classified as a mode of thought that has the ability to provide the basis for a subsequent xenophobic promotion and explication of a more “Caymanian” alternative to, in the writer’s frame of thinking, “today’s mess” (see previous quote). This Caymanian has expressed his fear of foreigners on two grounds: first, on the grounds of employment, he hints at the expatriates’ unfair advantage, succinctly expressed by another Caymanian elsewhere: ‘when they [foreigners] come here, they are usually more qualified than Caymanians so they are more likely to get that job.’¹⁸ Together with another perceived local-based idea – that the Caymanians’ lax work attitude typically discourages their employment¹⁹ – the former Caymanian has begun to demonstrate an enduring connection between his strong dislike of foreign nationals and the idea that Caymanians are being unfairly treated with regard to employment

¹⁷ Lorenzo Berry, ‘Letter: Expatriates must go home’, in *Cayman Net News*, at http://www.caymannetnews.com/archivelist.php?pageaction=showdetail&news_id=925&arcyear=2007&arcmonth=8&arcday=01, August 1, 2007; April 5, 2009.

¹⁸ Personal Interview with Anonymous 1, p.12.

¹⁹ For such sentiments, see, for instance, Patricia Smith, ‘Editorial: The Conundrum of Economics and Immigration’, in *Cayman Net News*, at http://www.caymannetnews.com/local.php?news_id=14647&start=3485&category_id=1, April 5, 2009; April 27, 2010; Michael Harris, ‘The truth that Caymanians can’t handle’, in *Cayman Net News*, at http://www.caymannetnews.com/Archive/Archive%20Articles/March%202001/Issue%2065/letters_5.html, March 20, 2001; April 27, 2010.

that should be rightfully reserved for them. Second, the former Caymanian is keen to link the idea of true Caymanianness outside of today's globalising, multicultural situation; he is perhaps striving to authenticate the established Caymanian in historical terms; however, his authentication here seems to be not so much dependent on the unassuming social nature of Cayman in the decades leading up to the 1970s, but on the idea that "our country" has a historical basis that is the making of the established Caymanian. This Caymanian and others of his persuasion have assured themselves of a partial myth: established Caymanians rightfully belong in Cayman because of their historical, ancestral link with it, and any subsequent social mess is strictly the foreigners' fault.²⁰

Yet what really makes an indigenous Caymanian? Is there such a thing when it is considered that the Cayman Islands represent in J.A. Roy Bodden's words, 'a totally imported society?'²¹ As we continue to impugn any traditional Caymanian sentiment in the midst of a multicultural, modern present, chairman of the Immigration Board of the Cayman Islands in 2006, David Ritch, believes that the term indigenous – or established – Caymanian is 'clouded' because of the prevalence of multiculturalism in Cayman society, especially as this concerns intermarriage among established Caymanians and foreign nationals. However, he is quick to establish that there is

²⁰ See footnote 16 and its corresponding in text information.

²¹ See J.A. Roy Bodden, *The Cayman Islands in Transition: The Politics, History, and Sociology of a Changing Society* (Kingston: Ian Randle Publishers, 2007), p.171.

such a thing as an indigenous Caymanian based on the following criterion: An indigenous Caymanian must have at least one parent born in the Cayman Islands, which would mean that that particular 'person [has a] family history [rooted in the Cayman Islands] of at least three generations.'²² Bodden shares Mr. Ritch's nativist view: 'Well, there are [fundamental] differences [between the established Caymanian and the new Caymanian]...[and] I would consider anyone who has been here for three generations—three generations and more – [an established Caymanian].' Bodden goes on to provide deeper insight into the idea of the historicity of true Caymanianness in the midst of a newer, more modern multiculturalism:

Now, those of us [that is, our Caymanian ancestors] who came before, long ago from the formative years, early settlement periods, would by virtue of the fact of those years have certain established privileges that the more recent comers wouldn't have... So, I make the distinction, Christopher, by saying (that) if you were here three generations or longer, then I have to consider you a Caymanian, in the same way that I am a Caymanian. But, now, that is not the legal definition, and, of course I was [criticized] when I launched my book for talking about established rather than indigenous Caymanians, I mean, [some Caymanians] wanted to take my hide off, or to separate me from my bones, you know, because they say, no, we ARE true Caymanians. And so, I put it to you that the distinction as it exists, or as it purports to exist, is not a legal one but, uh, probably a sociological or anthropological one, or even if we

²² See Alan Markoff, 'Caymanian number discussed', in the *Caymanian Compass*, at <http://www.caycompass.com/cgi-bin/CFPnews.cgi?ID=1015713>, August 20, 2006; March 20, 2009.

could say for our purposes, a historical one, but nevertheless it bears levy, it bears levy...²³

Bodden's nativist idea of being Caymanian by virtue of ancestry is often accompanied by a righteous indignation that amounts to a nationalist stance, where nationalism especially stresses a national's vocalized political, social, and cultural rights in the land of his ancestry.²⁴ Any such righteous indignation speaks – even in the seemingly most insignificant of circumstances – to a vigorous local support for a Caymanian identity steeped in history, a fact that, for its supporters, should both legitimate, privilege, and vindicate the true Caymanian in his diluting multicultural present. Briefly focussing on the legitimacy end of this attitudinal tripartite, as it were, let us ponder on the expressions of established Caymanian Naomi Oyog. Incensed by a letter to the editor that questioned her status as an established Caymanian, Mrs. Oyog's response locates the brunt of its basis in notions of history and ancestry, although she does acknowledge her marriage to a foreign national: 'I wish to make it abundantly clear that I am very much a Caymanian by birth, born in Little Cayman, to Caymanian parents, both were Boddens, my ancestors from many generations back were residents of Little Cayman [sic]. My last name is obviously

²³ Personal interview with J.A. Roy Bodden, October 12, 2008, p.12.

²⁴ See, for instance, Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2006, 2nd edition), chapter 1.

my married name, and I am close to the members of that family also.’²⁵ Mrs. Oyog’s view of her national self is at once nationalist: her reactive allegiance to her ancestry illumines her perceived legitimacy as an established Caymanian.²⁶ Indeed, this “rightful” allegiance allows Mrs. Oyog to maintain her own sense of Caymanianness which has been shaped by historical circumstance. Apart from being married to an American, this shaping signifies her belonging to an exclusive long-established Caymanian fraternity, a signification which has a nationalistic overtone and which can also give rise to explicit nationalist expressions. Thus with its purported emphasis on protecting the rights of Caymanians, we should anticipate that any specifically exclusivist component of nationalism would be invested in the perpetuation of a foreigner/Caymanian binary.

Before we look at the remaining attitudes of vindication and privilege as these relate to xenophobic and nationalist pronouncements, let us look at the foreign end of this binary in statistical terms. Jamaican expatriates, for instance, have consistently formed the highest incoming nationality between 1995 and 2005: by 1995, 8,601 Jamaican expatriates worked in the Cayman Islands, this figure increasing by about 50% by 2005, when 12,032 Jamaican expatriates were reported to have lived in the Cayman Islands. It should be noted, however, that these numbers decreased to

²⁵ Naomi Oyog, ‘Letter: Not about Caymanians versus foreigners’, in *Cayman Net News*, at http://www.caymannetnews.com/letters.php?news_id=10373&start=420&category_id=9, September 30, 2008; December 2, 2009.

²⁶ See, for instance, Liah Greenfeld, *Nationalism: Five Roads to Modernity* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 1992), pp.27-44.

10,828 the following year as a result of the introduction of Cayman visas for Jamaicans in October of 2005 and a further fine-tuning of the earlier implemented rollover policy, which stipulated that nonessential expatriate workers had to leave the islands after seven years, and had to be out of the islands for at least one year before they could reapply for employment. Other substantial foreign nationals by 2006 include Filipinos, at 2,353; Canadians at 1,949; citizens of the United Kingdom at 1,822; citizens of the United States of America at 1,487; and Hondurans at 1,358.²⁷

By 2006, then, 20,907 non-Caymanians resided in the Cayman Islands against 32,265 Caymanians who were not statistically divided into new Caymanians or established Caymanians, although Mr. Ritch estimated that same year that only 15,000 established Caymanians were believed to be in existence.²⁸ In spite of any established Caymanian attempt to dichotomize Caymanians, between 1999 and 2006, the legal Caymanian population inclusive of new and established Caymanians had increased by about 100%; 5,071 Caymanians were born in this time span alone.²⁹ We cannot be precisely certain of the statistical breakdown of the remaining 11,142 Caymanians, although it is likely that some foreign nationals would have married into Caymanian families while others would have been granted Caymanian status on the criterion of

²⁷ See ESO, 'Work Permits by Nationality, 1995-2006', at <http://www.eso.ky/pages.php?page=immigrationdata>, 2010; March 3, 2009.

²⁸ See footnote 22.

²⁹ ESO, Statistical Compendium 2008: Population and Vital Statistics, at <http://www.eso.ky/docum1/docum84.pdf>, 2010; March 5, 2009.

residency; however, we can be certain that in 2003, 2,850 foreign nationals of the latter figure were quickly granted Caymanian status, an act which, as we will see, substantially informs traditionalist Caymanian ideas about new Caymanians as veritable foreigners; indeed, the disseminators of such ideas are striving to uphold the cultural and ethnic unity of the past in a multicultural present.³⁰

It was the ruling UDP that awarded these status grants, stressing that their compulsion to do so was directly attributable to the fact that they were coming under increasing pressure from the United Kingdom with regard to human rights infringements. Many expatriates, the UDP argued, were eligible for the award of Caymanian status and that they had not received this status amounted to discrimination; according to the law, foreign nationals residing in the Cayman Islands for more than seven years are automatically eligible for Caymanian status. However, many established Caymanians, along with the Bar Association of the Cayman Islands and the Cayman Islands Chamber of Commerce, sought to overturn the grants, arguing that such a move was illegal as it was politically motivated.³¹ Established Caymanian Joseph Yates captured the angst of the time in his letter to the Editor of *Cayman Net News*:

³⁰ See, for instance, Cayman Islands Government, '2003 Status Grants', at http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.ky/portal/page?_pageid=1774,4726146&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL, December 23, 2009; January 5, 2009.

³¹ See Bodden, *The Cayman Islands*, p.200.

I am calling upon all Caymanians: let's all rally together and bring the island to a complete halt. The workforce should not go to work, instead we MUST go out and protest until the UDP steps down and changes what has been done. But there is one big problem we have here: our workforce probably contains half who are on the UDP side, who are the recipients of the now famous "Drive Thru Caymanian Status". Even so, don't let that stop us. I am willing to make my stance whatever it takes. Will other brave Caymanians follow?

We are in this position because we are too passive and proud, and have become too material minded and are so afraid to lose our high lifestyle and material possessions, Caymanians, wake up stand up forget about our foolish pride as our children's future is at stake here.

Personally I don't hate any of the UDP members. I just do not agree with what they have done, especially being against the will of the majority of the Caymanian people. All of a sudden Human Rights has been granted in the name of Cayman Status, WHY did it take 14 months before the 2004 general elections for this to happen?

I am not against any nationality [sic] and am not blaming the Jamaicans or any other nationality [sic] for any of this because some of these people, deserve Caymanian Status, but let's [sic] be prudent with it. This is a serious national issue that could turn against us in the long run.³²

³² (Lebbie) Joseph Yates, 'More discontent over Cabinet Caymanian Status Grants', in *Cayman Net News*, <http://www.caymannetnews.com/Archive/Archive%20Articles/September%202003/Issue%20491%20Thur/491-stories.html#nregion4>, September 18, 2004; November 29, 2009.

Nonetheless, any legal attempt to overturn the UDP's status grant was ultimately unsuccessful, as there was no existing law at the time with which to repeal the action. Nonetheless, in July 2005 an amendment was added to the Immigration Law of 2005, limiting status grants to only four per calendar year and restraining 'Cabinet from making a grant except where it is recommended by the Immigration Board and validated by the Legislative Assembly.'³³ Indeed, it came as no surprise that the UDP government was voted out of office in the 2005 general elections; many established Caymanians did not like the idea that so many "outsiders" were being quickly made Caymanians.

As I assess the functions of vindication and privilege within Caymanian nationalist sentiment inclined to xenophobia, let us consider the words of Dawn Nothwehr: 'Human beings are "hard-wired" to distinguish differences, and thus, there is a perennial need for people to give the differences distinguished among fellow humans significance, to interpret their meaning, and then, to act accordingly.'³⁴ Mrs. Oyog had earlier shown that the basis of this social "hardwiring," which anticipates and subsequently explains the Caymanian's sense of difference, rests on the belief in the ancestral legitimacy of the Caymanian past. As Section 3 has demonstrated, many established Caymanians in the present who tend to be traditionalist in their

³³ John Higginson, 'Status Law Changed', in *The Caymanian Compass*, <http://www.caycompass.com/cgi-bin/CFPnews.cgi?ID=1006107>, July 25, 2005; November 28, 2009.

³⁴ Dawn Nothwehr, *That They May Be One: Catholic Social Teaching on Racism, Tribalism and Xenophobia* (New York: Orbis Books, 2008), p.3.

thought patterns are inclined to see themselves as situated along a vibrant past-present cultural continuum; the younger ones who rely on the recollections of their older counterparts would be situated along the present end of the spectrum, while older Caymanians, by virtue of their lived experiences would find themselves positioned along the past portion of the continuum. Thus having ultimately interpreted their human – national – difference along this continuum, the Caymanian who feels that s/he is becoming outnumbered in their own society is likely to attach a decidedly xenophobic understanding towards foreign nationals who are perceived to be receiving the same benefits that should be reserved solely for “true” Caymanians; herein lies the Caymanians’ sense of privilege, the idea that such benefits should be reserved only for established Caymanians.³⁵

For example, when St. Vincent-born Nicosia Lawson won the 2008 Miss Cayman title, one Caymanian professing to be an established one was quick to reveal her disgust that an expatriate without Caymanian heritage and ancestry could win such a title: ‘The girl who won [Miss Cayman] is not Caymanian by birth, but she has her [status] papers’, the respondent begins, ‘[and] I don’t think it is fair because the true Caymanians who were up there couldn’t win because [of this]...[this] really boils my blood.’³⁶ This expression is distinctly nationalist and xenophobic: the foreign

³⁵ See *The Compact Edition of the Oxford Dictionary (Second Edition)* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), p.1434 [p.523].

³⁶ Debra Edwards, ‘Miss Cayman 2008 gets mixed reaction’, in *Cayman Net News*, at http://www.caymannetnews.com/article.php?news_id=9564, August 27, 2008; December 5, 2009.

national masquerading as a Caymanian has become the ultimate anathema for this Caymanian who is keen to invoke her own established Caymanianness, if by implication. Important to note here is that this nationalist, xenophobic perception of Ms. Lawson does not even entertain the legal basis on which her status as a Caymanian can be justified. Indeed, as certain established Caymanians continually seek to invoke an us/them differentiation, the likes of Ms. Lawson do not have the right to be conferred the title of Miss Cayman, as this right *must* emanate from the Caymanians' ancestral-historical actuality; instead, her legal designation as a new Caymanian has allowed her to circumvent this indispensable criterion for "true" Caymanianness. For the foregoing Caymanian, then, Ms. Lawson has effectively "stolen" what should have been any worthy, established Caymanian woman's dream and right, and thus she cannot legitimately be seen as Miss Cayman. Regardless of growing up in Cayman, Miss Lawson's perceived status as a foreigner feeds into the xenophobic Caymanians' sense of vindication, where this sensibility attempts to justify, by argument and/or evidence, the various threats associated with large numbers of foreign nationals in Cayman.³⁷

The concept of the new Caymanian, or the more derogatory "Paper Caymanian," was indeed created and sustained by established Caymanians who feel that they have become both a numerical and cultural minority in their own country.

³⁷ *The Compact Edition of the Oxford Dictionary (Second Edition)* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), p.2237 [p.642]; refer to definitions 3(c) and 4.

Established Caymanian Patricia Estwick begins to establish the “real” Caymanians’ angst and sorrow at the perceived loss of a Caymanian traditional way of life due to incoming foreign nationals who are able to “easily” assume the role of Caymanians: ‘AM I XENOPHOBIC...Because I am pro-Caymanian... Because I realize that I am a minority in my own country; [and] Because my culture is not embraced by the majority of new Caymanians[?]’ Mrs. Estwick continues to provide a pervasive local Caymanian understanding of the new Caymanian: ‘About commitment by the new Caymanians, I agree they should be committed, however, residency and land ownership alone do not prove commitment and entitle one to be part of our community [sic]; our process must include impact on infrastructure and social harmony. Ask the new Caymanians what their answer is when a new acquaintance asks them “where are you from?”’³⁸

Inherent in Mrs. Estwick’s classification of new Caymanians rests the justification that it is unlikely that the latter will be able to contribute to an authentic Caymanianness because their lineages – and indeed their financial intentions – are not rooted in the Caymanian past. We may therefore say that a possible function of this brand of Caymanian cultural discourse is to mobilize like-minded fellow Caymanians against the glut of incoming foreign nationals for the purpose of the preservation of an already vague Caymanian way (vague in light of the pervasive

³⁸ Patricia Estwick, ‘Caring doesn’t mean xenophobia’, in *The Caymanian Compass*, <http://www.caycompass.com/cgi-bin/CFPnews.cgi?ID=1015606>, August 15, 2006; November 28, 2009.

effects of globalisation and multiculturalism on Caymanians and indeed Caymanian society).³⁹ By “othering” the foreign national, Mrs. Estwick is keen both to demonstrate her perceived God-given right as an established Caymanian and to justify the grounds on which she builds her somewhat xenophobic argument. ‘It is a serious concern as we now stand and look around in our little country’, begins Lorenzo Berry, ‘which is being taken away by foreigners – expats who know nothing about how this country came to be. Ask our older Caymanians and the seafarers.’ In *his* nationalistic othering of foreign nationals, Mr. Berry further justifies the foreign nationals’ parasitic nature by placing them against his perception of the established Caymanians’ indispensable role in transforming a materially austere past into an economically robust present: ‘...when Caymanians [were] [struggling] to build this country amidst mosquitoes and maiden plum and ticks, where were the expats? Nowhere to be found. As it now stands, they are taking it over. I say go back where you really come from.’⁴⁰ Mr. Berry’s justification confidently implies that the expatriates in question came to the Cayman Islands only after the real Caymanians had laboured towards their islands’ economic prosperity; however, based on my earlier analysis of the beginnings of Cayman’s success (see Section 4.1), is this really the case? Did Caymanians make Cayman what it currently is, or was it the massive inflow of overseas investment and incoming workers? Although I am inclined to

³⁹ This thought was in part fashioned from Carl Degler, ‘National Identity and the Conditions of Tolerance’, in *Identity and Tolerance: Nationalism, Racism, and Xenophobia in Germany and the United States*, edited by Norbert Finzsch *et al.* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp.3-20.

⁴⁰ Lorenzo Berry, ‘Reader wants expats gone’, in the *Caymanian Compass*, at <http://www.caycompass.com/cgi-bin/CFPnews.cgi?ID=1024050>, August 2, 2007; November 30, 2009.

agree with the latter viewpoint, by juxtaposing the idea of the “true” Caymanian with the expatriate, Caymanians like Mrs. Estwick and Mr. Berry are indeed justifying and confirming the established Caymanians’ legitimacy in Cayman. This legitimacy ultimately determines the established Caymanians’ privilege in their geographical and cultural homeland in which, in self-perceptive and indeed numerical terms, they are becoming a minority. In their nationalist zeal, such Caymanians have established what Julia Kristeva has called a nationality code predicated on notions of lineage and history;⁴¹ such notions relate directly to promulgated xenophobic justifications of the established Caymanians’ sense belonging to, and rootedness in, *their* Caymanian experience. This distinctly exclusivist scheme becomes very important for some established Caymanians in distinguishing the true Caymanian from the foreign national and the new Caymanian alike.

Yet there is a more benign modern Caymanian outlook that is not as immediately noticeable as its nationalist, traditionalist counterpart. ‘As we move forward into greater globalization’, begins James Bodden III, ‘we have no other choice but to accept diversity as an intricate and important facet of the business world.

⁴¹ Julia Kristeva, *Strangers to Ourselves*, translated by Leon Roudiez (New York: Columbia Press, 1994), chapter 1.

Ethnocentrism is no longer a tool of business.’⁴² Indeed, ethnocentrism – the view that one’s [ethnic and/or cultural] group is superior to others – is intimately related to what prolific twentieth century political science professor William Sumner calls ‘folkways’; in this case, folkways refers to traditional Caymanian ways of doing, thinking, and being, which, as I have earlier shown, become so idealized that they become superior to any incoming ways by virtue of their historical specificity.⁴³ In this sense, ethnocentrism and the foregoing nationalist-traditionalist Caymanian lines of thought both hold that Caymanianness is inevitably more legitimate than an incoming, often transient foreignness.

Yet as an established Caymanian, Mr. Bodden begins to challenge any ostensibly entrenched line of Caymanian thought by supplanting *Caymanian* with *the individual*: ‘As...individual[s] we should always be willing to understand. Each person is different, with differing likes and behaviors.’⁴⁴ Mr. Bodden’s pronouncements are indeed being driven by a logic that can accompany globalisation, and which is ultimately guided by notions of benevolent individualism. In this sense, globalisation transcends the one-tracked logic that it is merely the ‘inevitable process of a universalizing Western civilization battling the parochial forces of nationalism,

⁴² James M. Bodden III, ‘Commentary: Son of the Soil: Defining Diversity in the Cayman Islands’, in *Cayman Net News*, at <http://www.caymannetnews.com/news-20781--10-10---.html>, April 8, 2010; April 19, 2010.

⁴³ Cf. Donald Kinder, *Us Against Them: Ethnocentric Foundations of American Opinion* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010), introduction.

⁴⁴ Bodden III, ‘Commentary’.

localism and tribalism.’⁴⁵ Instead, a narrow interpretative gaze assumes a more essential, legalist undertone that has to do with Susan George’s idea of the globalisation of human rights. George argues that given the rich-poor disparities caused by globalisation, greater effort should be made to treat the incoming ‘losers’ – the blue collar and menial workers – just as the prosperous winners – the incoming investors and stockbrokers.⁴⁶ Implicit in Mr. Bodden’s expression, then, is that economic globalisation is indeed necessary to a continued Caymanian prosperity, and therefore established Caymanians should respect its vital incoming purveyors and accept them, on an individual basis, for who they are; this fundamentally speaks to the imperative that Caymanians must accept incoming cultural sensibilities which may prove different from their own.

Therefore, in the minds of the likes of Mr. Bodden, there is an enduring connection between the respectable treatment of “outsiders” and a vibrant economy. ‘In the end’, begins the editor of the *Cay Net News* Newspaper, another Caymanian with a decidedly more modern philosophy, ‘this country must recognize the need to grow and that means accepting the fact that those not born here will contribute and make their lives in this country. And we need to make that as attractive as possible if we are to keep the highly skilled and diverse work force we need to maintain our

⁴⁵ Manfred Steger, *Globalization: A Very Short Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009, second edition), p.1.

⁴⁶ Susan George, ‘Globalizing Rights?’, in *Globalizing Rights: The Oxford Amnesty Lectures 1999*, edited by Matthew Gibney (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), pp. 15-33.

economic success.’⁴⁷ John Ebanks continues to illuminate the foregoing position: ‘[We should ensure] that there is a process in place where neither Caymanian, visitors, nor residents feel ostracized. It’s about being able to create employment opportunities for our own, while providing a non-hostile, crime-free climate for present and future citizens, visitors, and local and foreign investors.’⁴⁸ Although Mr. Ebanks’s expression here is noticeably balanced and inclusionary, we should appreciate that his subtle entreaties are being ultimately guided by economic considerations; indeed, one gets the impression that had Cayman’s economy not been prosperous, the traditionalist/modern Caymanian dichotomy would not be as intense as it presently is.

Yet it should not be overlooked that not all modern-thinking Caymanians are only concerned with the state of the present economy and the need to apply fairness to all who contribute to this economy – Caymanian and foreign national alike – but they are also mindful of the importance of their past to any present economic condition. Consider the words of the leader of the -by then opposition UDP party in 2006, McKeeva Bush, which partly echoes Mr. Berry’s understanding, if without a xenophobic edge: ‘Cayman was built by the sweat and blood of our people’, Mr.

⁴⁷ Desmond Seales, ‘Editorial: If not Caymanians then what about deserving residency?’ in *Cayman Net News*, at <http://www.caymannetnews.com/cgi-script/csArticles/articles/000032/003278.htm>, June 26, 2006; April 19, 2010.

⁴⁸ John Henry Ebanks, ‘How to open the closed doors’, in *Cayman Net News*, at <http://www.caymannetnews.com/cgi-script/csArticles/articles/000077/007724.htm>, November 3, 2006; April 19, 2010.

Bush begins, 'but we couldn't have done it without the help of outsiders.'⁴⁹ Mr. Bush, unlike Mr. Berry, or even Mrs. Estwick, seems to take into account the ways in which foreign nationals, beginning in the 1970s, substantially contributed to Cayman's economic boom and thus a prosperous Caymanian way of life. Yet he is careful to preempt this contribution with a decidedly more ancestrally bound contribution, thereby confirming his position as a modern-thinking Caymanian with traditionalist underpinnings. This Caymanian way of thinking is highly realistic in that, while it is premised on an idealist understanding of the past, it is also keen to incorporate the present reality into its professions of human-national equality.⁵⁰

Let us here consider how Caymanians split between traditional and modern thinking are likely to interpret certain modern features of their society differently, specifically with regard to the ways in which economic globalisation has ushered in an unprecedented era of crime. Although the Economic and Statistics Office of the Cayman Islands does not provide any statistics on crime, there is evidence, according to the Royal Cayman Islands Police Service (RCIPS), with which to support an increase in petty crimes like burglary and more serious crimes like murder throughout the years. In the first three months of 2009, for instance, 646 offences – mostly attempted burglary – were committed, where only 580 such

⁴⁹ Alan Markoff, 'Caymanians resent expats', in *The Caymanian Compass*, at <http://www.caycompass.com/cgi-bin/CFPnews.cgi?ID=1015784>, August 22, 2006; November 30, 2009.

⁵⁰ Cf. Pericles Lewis, *The Cambridge Introduction to Modernism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), chapter 1.

offences had been committed in the same quarter of 2008.⁵¹ The year 2009 also witnessed an exponential increase in murders, with nine murders against the three that had been committed the previous year.⁵² How, in the initial analysis, would traditionalist and modern-thinking Caymanians interpret this otherwise unspecific statistical picture?

A Caymanian with a decidedly traditional mindset would respond to the foregoing evidentiary account by expressing: 'If you want to get rid of crime, round up all the foreigners that don't have jobs and send them back where they came from. Idle time makes troublesome neighbors [sic]. If you are not working you have a lot of time to be mischievous!'⁵³ Indeed, there is nothing fundamentally wrong with this expression; what the writer is advocating represents common sense: if foreign nationals aren't working, then they are more likely to commit crime and so should be allowed to go back home. However, that there have been no published statistics illuminating the extent to which foreign nationals have contributed to crime in Cayman, the writer is in the act of supposition, which is being driven, arguably, by xenophobic ideas. We should strive to understand the extent of this Caymanian's

⁵¹ *Cayman Net News*, 'Stats show rise in crime', in *Cayman Net News*, at http://www.caymannetnews.com/local.php?news_id=15919&start=2585&category_id=1, June 2, 2009; April 17, 2010.

⁵² Kevin Shereves, 'Focus on crime prevention', in *Cayman Net News*, at http://www.caymannetnews.com/article.php?news_id=20211, February 12, 2010.

⁵³ *Cayman Net News*, 'Government officials hold press conference to announce crime crackdown', in *Cayman Net News*, at <http://www.caymannetnews.com/2004/09/732/crime-comment.shtml>, September 2, 2004; April 19, 2010.

subliminal disparagement of the foreign national; by referring to foreign nationals as “them,” he has, in effect, elevated himself and his fellow Caymanians outside of the ambit of criminality, while revealing a persistent traditionalist contempt for foreignness. It is not difficult to attach the xenophobic attitude of the likes of Mrs. Estwick and Mr. Berry to the expressions of my recent informant, and thus we begin to realize the ideological basis for any Caymanian call for the repatriation of foreign nationals.

Yet, in modern terms, the likes of Mrs. Suckoo, while “realistically”⁵⁴ acknowledging the crime problem, would not be working within the ideological parameters of her traditionalist counterparts keen on the expatriates’ repatriation. Like Mr. Bush and Mr. Ebanks, Mrs. Suckoo is aware of the fact that Cayman’s present reality has largely been determined by a foreign influence. Let us consider her expressions with special reference to Jamaicans:

I am Caymanian and I have seen the increase in crime, felt discrimination and have often been angered by how outsiders view us. Cayman and Jamaica are too close, in history and proximity, to waste time pointing fingers. How about thinking up ways we can all solve our problems, and yes that includes the many crimes and atrocities perpetrated by our own people?⁵⁵

⁵⁴ See footnote 50 and its corresponding in text information.

⁵⁵ Mrs. Suckoo, ‘Letter to the Editor: These back and forth attacks prevent unity’, in *Cayman Net News*, at <http://www.caymannetnews.com/cgi-script/csArticles/articles/000120/012049.htm>, February 26, 2007; April 18, 2010.

Mrs. Suckoo readily acknowledges an increase in crime in Cayman. She is also attempting to validate the wider concerns of her traditionalist counterparts in her stress that, like them, she too has experienced discrimination and anger with regard to foreign nationals. However, her views are not one-sided, neither are they essentially driven by xenophobic considerations. Instead, Mrs. Suckoo demonstrates an equanimity of thought which can be unraveled in historical and realistic terms: in a historical sense, her recognition of Cayman's historical ties to Jamaica becomes an enduring symbol in Cayman's evolution from little known islands to one of the world's largest financial centres; thus Mrs. Suckoo is acknowledging Jamaica's indispensable position in the history of a currently prosperous Cayman. In the realistic sense, Mrs. Suckoo, like Mr. Ebanks and Mr. Bush, is keen to present a full picture of Cayman's present condition, although she goes a step further by openly stating that Caymanians are just as much a part of the crime problem as foreigners. The underlying idea here is that, yes, Cayman is prosperous, and, yes, prosperity does come with a price; however, the foreign national is not the sole cause of Cayman's crime woes and so *should not* be singled out for discrimination. Yet the modern imperative that foreigners not be singled inexorably returns to the idea of their ultimate importance to a prosperous Caymanian way of life: the actuality of globalisation makes this imperative possible in the first place given that globalisation and its various local success stories are largely built on the back of incomers. More importantly here however is that modern-thinking Caymanians do not rely solely on

idealistic notions of the past and their xenophobic offshoots, but are quicker to acknowledge the links between past and present in their quest in living in the here and now.

Everette Humphrey's account provides further context for split Caymanian cultural sentiment in past-present terms. Born in Indiana in 1934, Mr. Humphrey met established Caymanian Cora Coe there and they were married by 1958, returning to Grand Cayman that same year. Marrying into a Caymanian family extending more than five generations back (beyond James Coe Senior who was Grand Cayman's Senior Magistrate in 1834⁵⁶), Mr. Humphrey came to appreciate the importance of keeping a certain Coe tradition alive (discussed below). Nonetheless, speaking in 2002, Mr. Humphrey's declaration of a traditional Caymanian way of life begins to establish the importance of memory and the act of remembering the past: 'I always felt that Caymanians were a very close-knit community', he begins, '...[and] "within a few years, there's going to be more people on this island that are not Caymanians than there are Caymanian."' ⁵⁷ Mr. Humphrey's understanding had already come to fruition, for in 1999 established Caymanians represented 41% of their islands' population; in numerical terms this meant that by this time there were 16,052

⁵⁶ See, for instance, CINA, *Our Islands' Past: Edward Corbet's Report and Census of 1802 on the Cayman Islands*, vol.1 (George Town: CINA and Cayman Free Press, 1992).

⁵⁷ CINA, Interview with Everette Humphrey, January 2, 1996, p. 12.

Caymanians residing in the Cayman Islands, while 22,968 of the islands' residents were foreign nationals.⁵⁸

Nonetheless, we are able to link Mr. Humphrey's present discourse with a sense of traditionalist urgency as perpetuated by, in his opinion, his Caymanian father-in-law, "Will" Coe, who would have been well aware of the "ancient glory" of his family's lineage. Before his death, Will had made a "recording" for Mr. Humphrey which boldly asserted that he (Mr. Humphrey) was not a son-in-law but in fact his son. Realizing how important this was for Will Coe, Mr. Humphrey 'took a page out of his [father-in-law's] book', and did the same for his sons and daughters-in-laws. The act of transcription is not necessarily the most important thing here, but the fact that it represents a traditional gesture rooted in Coe tradition. Such a gesture, then, in perpetuity, would serve not only to keep the Coe lineage in some way historically grounded in a multicultural present, but would have also ensured that the family's "incomers" remained compelled to maintain the lineage's Caymanian historicity, if only in memory: "'This is the best thing we can do to keep his [Will's] memory alive is to start something that he started and keep it going,'" Mr. Humphrey concludes;⁵⁹ indeed, the conscious act of keeping historical memory alive through the repetition of an act or custom underscores the idea of tradition. The practical outworking of this particular Coe traditional gesture conforms to Hobsbawm's idea of certain

⁵⁸ Statistics can be found in Craton, *Founded*, pp.365-366.

⁵⁹ Interview with Everette, p. 15.

traditions as '[somewhat]...invented, constructed and formally instituted...[thereby] establishing [themselves] with great rapidity.'⁶⁰ Utilising this aspect of Coe tradition as a template for the arguments which follow in section 4.3, I ask: when an established Caymanian engages in acts of remembering and performing an aspect of her culture, do these acts, for the fact of their dedicated repetition, amass even greater cultural potency and legitimacy in a multicultural, diluting present? Indeed, an unmistakable intent of keeping a lineage's memory alive underlies Mr. Humphrey's understanding of tradition, and any promoted and accepted repetition of it *should* serve as further historical grounding amidst a multicultural present.

Yet to what extent does Mr. Humphrey's understanding here represent true Caymanian traditionalist thought when he automatically represents an agent of multiculturalism in the Cayman Islands by virtue of his status as an incoming foreign national? Would hyper-xenophobic Caymanians readily acknowledge Mr. Humphrey, who clearly understands himself – and is indeed understood by the established Caymanian Coe line – as an accepted part of Coe tradition through marriage? Focusing for the moment on ideological Caymanian imperatives of a decidedly more modern nature, Mr. Bush provides an answer to the foregoing questions: 'Intermarriages never hurt us [as established Caymanians], [but] they

⁶⁰ Eric Hobsbawm, *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p.1.

[have] helped us.’⁶¹ The idea of a Caymanian/foreigner synergy underpins Mr. Bush modern ideas and effectively prompts a return to the modern views earlier looked at that Caymanians ultimately need foreigners. The implication here – as potentially condescending as it may be – is that Caymanians must hold on to those foreign nationals who are willing to “marry Caymanian”, for perhaps the intention to *marry Caymanian* signals those foreign-nationals’ investment in Caymanianness; indeed, Mr. Humphrey is a powerful case in point of the possibility of the “sincere” foreign national’s Caymanianization, a possibility which, to return to the questions asked of the traditionalist Caymanian, profoundly counters those nativist ideologues who are dedicated to promoting the idea that the foreign national’s allegiance is unquestionably to be found without the Cayman Islands. Mr. Bush’s attitude towards foreign nationals achieves further substantiation in the words of another established Caymanian seemingly more inclined to the accommodation of foreign nationals: ‘[Being Caymanian should be]...about nationalism with a sense of understanding of who brought us to this point (our forefathers and foreigners), how and what we had to do to get here and what is the best course of action to maintain a stable country, a highly educated and competitive work force, and a healthy environment for present and future generations.’⁶²

In the final analysis, when we juxtapose the xenophobic views of certain Caymanians against the more accommodating views of other Caymanians, we are

⁶¹ See Markoff, ‘Caymanians resent expats’.

⁶² See Ebanks, ‘How to open the closed doors’.

presented with a dilemma: on the one hand, there are some established Caymanians who understand themselves, by virtue of their history, as the true natives responsible for a unique and prosperous way of life; on the other hand, however, there are other established Caymanians who, while acknowledging their historical singularity, are also inclined to embrace the idea of an indispensable foreign input vis-à-vis Cayman's economic prosperity.

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In conclusion, not only has the previous assessment established two conflicting lines of Caymanian thought, but it also provides segue into what I call the cultural multi-dimensional concept, the idea that because understandings of a so-called single culture are not monolithic, but conflicting, such dimensional conflicts will extend to other incoming cultures. It is worth here assessing the views of Caymanian philosopher Dave Martins. His distinct argument that 'concord will begin to appear only when we begin to understand why cultures are what they are', is rather limited in its explanatory scope.⁶³ Cultures are necessarily bound to clash when any incoming culture proves inundating to the host culture, and if certain popular aspects of that incoming culture, on the basis of a host cultural embrace, are accepted and modified by some indigenes and rejected by others. Martins's posit thus misses the point that the host culture truly exhibits the allegiances of its members only

⁶³ Dave Martins, 'Why Cultures Are', in *Foundation*, edited by Henry Mootoo, volume 2, issue 3 (George Town: Cayman National Cultural Foundation, 2006), p. 24.

when its system of internalized knowledge, convictions, beliefs, ideals, values, etc., is weathered in the turbulent, disruptive wake of its more robust incoming equivalent(s). Short of psychological cultural genocide or the total assimilation of the weaker culture into the stronger one, conflict of one sort or the other is the *sine qua non* of coexisting cultures having achieved compatibility on one level while remaining wholly antithetical on another. And, that the Caymanian voice remains “loud” on the matter of the preponderance of foreign nationals on *its* soil (a very problematic decibel in light of the already vague articulation of Caymanian culture) nonetheless serves to express the fact that Caymanians, although culturally influenced by the “outside,” have ideologically secured themselves as Cayman’s legitimate, entitled inhabitants.

To understand the clash of cultures in the Cayman Islands along with Caymanian culture *itself* is to realize that culture as a national system of beliefs, symbols, values, etc., will *never* demonstrate itself in wholly monolithic terms, but across a spectrum of dimensions that are either compatible or incompatible. For instance, from Mr. McLean’s cultural discourse (see pp. 259-260) it can be inferred that the modern economic dimension of Caymanian culture is bound to come into conflict with the more traditional and historical dimension, and to the point of nationalist irrationality. In contrast, the economic dimension of culture might achieve congruency with the manifested essences of the modern social dimension as both

spheres are hyper-invested in a culture of materialism. And what of the youth dimension of Caymanian culture, which is quite modern and impressionable in its manifestations? How would it interact and engage with the traditional dimension of Caymanian culture? Indeed, it is my intention to assess the daily interactions of these various social dimensions in another study; this study, however, is concerned with the potential clash between modern thinking and traditional – at times, xenophobic – sentiment and the ways in which they both fuel a Caymanian cultural ideational framework.

Throughout the preceding paragraphs, I have attempted to introduce the idea that, despite its vague present state, Caymanians can rightfully claim that they are in legitimate possession of a cultural body of knowledge that has been established on Cayman soil and that is affected both by local history and incoming cultural influences. The analyses that follow thus attempt to further explicate any cultural rift associated with these affectations by placing special emphasis on Cayman's two premiere cultural events – Pirates Week and Carnival Batabano (from here on referred to as Batabano).

4.3 The 'Traditional' Against the Modern: Interrogating Present-day Caymanian Cultural and National[ist] Sentiment with Regard to Pirates Week and Batabano

To the people involved in the present pulling and tugging, my only advice is that rancour and intransigence don't lead anywhere. Look at what's in front of you and at what the indications are. Cultural choice is the most powerful social force in the world; it dominates all political, economic and social decisions. In this case, as in others, it will eventually settle the question (Martins, 2003, at <http://www.caymannetnews.com>)

4.3.1 Pirates Week: The Traditionalist Caymanian Cultural Imagination and Modern Sensibilities

Ever since 1977 (with the exception of 2004, when Hurricane Ivan brought extensive damage to Grand Cayman¹), Caymanians of all colours and creeds, along with a wide range of expatriates and tourists, have packed the streets by the thousands in celebration of the annual National Pirates Week Festival. The Pirates Week Committee, which is a public body that works with the Department of Tourism,² in their estimation, hints at the legitimacy of Pirates Week in historical terms in the following description: '[t]all ships in the harbor and pirates ashore, Cayman is caught in a time warp and taken back in time. What better opportunity to experience

¹ Hurricane Ivan is considered by many Caymanians as the worst hurricane to have hit Cayman since the 1932 Hurricane which brought extensive damage to the island of Cayman Brac especially.

² See Cayman Islands Government,

<http://www.gov.ky/portal/page? pageid=1142,1481505& dad=portal& schema=PORTAL>; May 7, 2009.

what life was like in the Cayman of yesteryear?’³ This description is a potentially powerful one in its attempt to provide Pirates Week a vibrant historical grounding. However, the historicity of Pirates Week cannot adequately be answered or refuted on such an ostensibly incomplete description. In light of this seeming incompleteness, then, I provide additional details of the festivities associated with Pirates Week.

Pirates Week begins with a late-night firework display, which is followed by outdoor “fetes” – or parties – from which emanate such musical forms as reggae, soca, calypso; these fetes usually last until well into the ‘wee hours of the morning.’ Thereafter, and throughout about eleven November days⁴ there are various activities ranging from costume street parades to sports events. In addition, the District Heritage Days – five such days in Grand Cayman and one for the sister islands⁵ – are

³ See supplemental publication to Pirates Week Office, *30th Annual Cayman Islands Pirates Week: The Official Souvenir Programme for the 2007 Pirates Week Festival of the Cayman Islands* (Grand Cayman: Cayman Islands Government, 2007), p.2.

⁴ Initially created to attract tourists in the quiet October month, recent Pirates Week festivals have been moved to the month of November. By 2006 the Pirates Week Office and the Tourism Attraction Board had acknowledged their earlier collaborative effort ‘to move the festival into the less rainy month of November, instead of the usual October period.’ In 2001 and 2004, for instance, various activities had to be deferred to November because of heavy October rains. ‘The decision to move the Festival was made after much consultation with tourism industry stakeholders, the Ministry of Tourism and the Department of Tourism’, Chief Executive Officer of the Tourism Attraction Board, Gilbert Connolly, expressed at a 2006 press conference. The move, then, was seen by all parties involved ‘as advantageous and necessary’, and, in fact, did no affect any ‘massive turnout of crowds.’ See *Cayman Net News*, ‘Plans afoot for Pirates Week’s 30th anniversary’, <http://www.caymannetnews.com/cgi-script/csArticles/articles/000094/009425.htm>, December 15, 2006; April 28, 2009; See also *Cayman Net News*, ‘The Pirates Week Festivities Go On’, <http://www.caymannetnews.com/Archive/Archive%20Articles/November%202001/Issue%20128/The%20Pirates%20Week.html>, November 20, 2001; April 28, 2009.

⁵ Grand Cayman is comprised of five districts; these are, West Bay, George Town, East End, Bodden Town and North Side; Cayman Brac has its own districts (West End, Stake Bay, Watering Place, Creek and Spot Bay), but for Pirates Week, it and Little Cayman represent one district.

said to allow a rich nuanced glimpse into the heritage and traditions that shaped each of Cayman's districts, from West Bay to East End.⁶ Caymanian ways of old are especially put on display at the heritage days, such displays ranging from silver palm tapestry, to traditional cooking methods and dance, to exhibitions of the Cayman catboat and traditional Cayman houses.⁷ Local food and drink can also be found at the heritage days (including Cayman's renowned Tortuga and Blackbeard rums), as well as many of the other events and activities of Pirates Week. Nonetheless, the festival's most popular event in numerical terms, according to Pirates Week Director Dave Martins,⁸ is the 'mock pirate invasion, [in which]...two old time sailing vessels loaded with "pirates" make a surprise landing at the bowl-shaped George Town harbor...'⁹ As this particular spectacle is played out, the spectator would have begun to realize that a deliberately crafted story is unfolding: the invading pirates are enemies of the state, as it were; initially fighting each other at sea, they thereafter join forces in their raid on George Town. However, it is when

⁶ See, for instance, *Cayman Net News*, 'North Side Heritage Day', in http://www.caymannetnews.com/article.php?news_id=11520, November 14, 2008; 'The October Month of Catboats', <http://www.caymannetnews.com/Archive/Archive%20Articles/October%202000/Issue%2028/catboat.html>, October 20, 2000; 'Pirates Week makes waves', http://www.caymannetnews.com/archivelist.php?news_id=3485&pageaction=showdetail&news_id=3485&arctyear=2007&arcmmonth=11&arcdlay=16, November 16, 2007; April 29, 2009. Historian Michael Craton briefly assesses the District Heritage Days and their importance both to Pirates Week and an undeniable Caymanian sense of heritage. See *Founded Upon the Seas: A History of the Cayman Islands and Their People* (Kingston: Ian Randle Publishers, 2003), 410-411.

⁷ For a pictorial representation of the District Heritage Days, see Pirates Week Administration, 'Photo Album', in *Pirates Week: The National Festival of the Cayman Islands*, <http://www.piratesweekfestival.com/>, 1999-2008; September 20, 2008.

⁸ Personal Interview with Dave Martins, October 5, 2008, p.7.

⁹ Pirates Week Administration, *Pirates Week: The National Festival of the Cayman Islands*, at www.piratesweekfestival.com, 1999-2007; November 8, 2007.

these pirates make landfall that the spectators turn their gaze on a front of English troops along the shore. Garbed in traditional army clothing, the troops draw their pistols as they are charged by pirates.¹⁰

Indeed, the aforementioned descriptions of Pirates Week are worded for a specific purpose; yet what purpose ultimately drives these promulgations? Tourism? A heartfelt sense of culture? In firm control of the festival's advertising process, the Pirates Week Office assumes a central position in any such promulgation. In the first place, the office's vibrant descriptions, together with the intention of the festival's founder (later to be discussed), is partly targeting the tourist population. With this target population in mind, Pirates Week is vigorously promoted as '[eleven]...fun-filled festive days in the sun with something for everyone, and a lot of it FREE!' Yet in cultural terms, Pirates Week has also been touted as an 'exciting national festival', and passionately promoted as '[a]n authentic slice of the native Caribbean...[and] the only event of its kind in the Caribbean region.'¹¹ Therefore, any negative yet honest understanding of culture with regard to the incongruence between historical maritime piracy and its romantic counterpart is bound either to get lost in the

¹⁰ For pictorial depictions of any such historical re-enactments see, for instance, The Pirates Week Office, *Pirates Week: Cayman Islands National Festival* (George Town: Island Companies Ltd., 2008).

¹¹ Pirates Week Administration, *Pirates Week*.

aforementioned descriptions, or else becomes completely overlooked if it is incompatible with an otherwise superficially positive cultural promulgation.¹²

It is true that the irresistible marketability of Caribbean culture cannot be ignored, and so the argument could effortlessly be made that the Pirates Week Office together with the Cayman Islands Tourist Board are simply advertising a product for the purpose of generating revenue. Yet we should ask ourselves the extent to which established Caymanians have recognized any cultural connection between a calculated promotion of Caymanian cultural sensibilities and a traditional Caymanian lifestyle; any such recognition eventually returns to Caymanian cultural sentiment torn between modern and traditional thought. Nonetheless, in the initial analysis towards the enduring cultural “legitimacy” of Pirates Week, the attempts to both map and nationally contextualize the festival’s beginnings are made.

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By November 7, 1978, four days after the Caribbean island of Dominica gained its independence from Great Britain and other Eastern Caribbean islands anxiously awaited complete disconnection from the motherland, Caymanians appeared most content with their colonial arrangement, and were ‘basking in the biggest, boldest

¹² Cf. Anonymous, ‘Opinion: The Heritage Day that never was’, in *Cayman Net News*, at http://www.caymannetnews.com/archivelist.php?news_id=3831&pageaction=showdetail&news_id=3831&arcyyear=2007&arcmonth=11&arcdays=30, November 30, 2007; April 28, 2009.

national festival in history.’¹³ If the inaugural Pirates Week national festival in 1977 was lost in obscurity, its 1978 version certainly was not. Although an absence of monthly tourism statistics in the 1970s and 1980s persists, the exponential jump in tourist air arrivals in 1978 by 15.2% from the previous year seems, in part, to correspond with intense marketing efforts which found the support of a wide cross-section of Caymanians. Indeed, between May and December of 1977 the Caribbean Tourism Research Centre conducted a survey intended to capture Caymanian attitudes of tourism and the ways in which tourism proved beneficial ‘to the economy and Cayman life in general.’ A total of 295 Caymanians participated in the study whose results ultimately revealed that among that number, 77% felt that the Cayman Islands would be in great financial trouble if not for the tourism boom; important as well was that 85% expressed the belief that tourism created vital local jobs.¹⁴ The survey’s results begin to show the substantial local popularity behind James Bodden’s conception that any financial success with tourism must represent a synergy between government initiative and local enterprise – in effect, between public and private sectors.

The 2008 Executive Director of Pirates Week, Dave Martins, maintains that ‘[t]he [Pirates Week] [f]estival represents a united effort in keeping our heritage alive

¹³ The *Caymanian Compass*, ‘Cayman basks in the biggest, boldest national festival in history’, November 7, 1978, pp. 1, 2.

¹⁴ The *Caymanian Compass*, ‘Caymanians have positive attitude towards tourism’, March 10, 1978, pp. 1-2.

which was a fundamental objective of [James] Bodden.]]¹⁵ James Bodden's perceived objective is regarded as nothing less than an enduring vision with its basis in an age when Cayman was beginning to experience its first real economic boom. Indeed, by 1976 James Bodden had envisioned a bold national festival intended to '[lure] tourists in [the] seasonally quiet...[months].'¹⁶ In the first Pirates Week souvenir programme, the new Tourism Minister was perhaps the mastermind behind the following extract:

If we are to keep abreast of the progress made by other island destinations of comparative size and attractions, we know we must do something special each year, particularly during the traditionally lean months. Pirates Week is not only intended to give tourists a little fun and excitement, it is intended that residents as well should get involved, participate in the various events and generally thoroughly enjoy themselves.¹⁷

James Bodden was well aware of the potential worth of Pirates Week in terms of revenue. Yet at the news conference meant to inaugurate the festival, the full intention of his vision was revealed. Not only did he seem to want to 'involve Caymanians in the tourism promotion drive' behind the national festival, but he felt that the best way to achieve any great measure of success was to borrow from

¹⁵ Digicel Cayman promotional interview with Dave Martins, *Digicel Cayman*, 'Pirates Week Festival', http://www.digicelcayman.com/en/about/sponsorships/festival_pirates, 2008; April 27, 2009.

¹⁶ *Cayman Net News*, 'Cayman Celebrates 25 Years of Pirates Week', <http://www.caymannetnews.com/Archive/Archive%20Articles/June2001/Issue90/Cayman.html>, June 2001; April 27, 2009.

¹⁷ Pirates Week Office, *Cayman Islands Pirates Week, 29 October-5 November 1977: Official Souvenir Programme* (George Town: *The Nor'wester*, 1977), p.3; See also, Craton, *Founded*, p.410.

various established and popular festivals in the western hemisphere: thus he wanted a festival that would 'be part Trinidad carnival, part Mexican fiesta and part...[New Orleans] Mardi Gras.'¹⁸ Aware of the popularity of these celebrations and the ways in which a tailor-made Cayman equivalent could secure vital revenue, Bodden's following words to the local press in 1977 take on added meaning: "'If the event is successful we envision making it an annual affair'":¹⁹ One could glean from such comments that any success associated with Pirates Week would have, in the first place, been largely dependent on the number of visitors it attracted; Pirates Week's initial survival, then, seemed dependent on its success with tourists, and any considerations of cultural and national importance would have therefore been equally dependent on the extent of *that* initial success.

The extent of this success is not immediately visible in the inaugural monthly tourism statistics of 1995 and into the twenty-first century, and, unfortunately, the ESO does not provide specific monthly statistics for Pirates Week. However, we should here anticipate the monthly increase in tourist air arrivals with regard to Pirates Week. In November, 1995, for instance, 29,900 tourists visited the Cayman Islands, a 0.7% increase from the previous month. By 1999, November arrivals had jumped to 32,300, up 1.4% from the previous month. By 2001, however, November arrivals were on the decrease due in large part to the September 11 attacks. Only

¹⁸ *Cayman Net News*, 'Cayman Celebrates 25 Years of Pirates Week.'

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

23,100 tourists had visited the Cayman Islands that November, although this month had witnessed a 2.1% increase in tourist arrival from the previous month.²⁰ Nonetheless, despite any such overall decrease in tourist numbers in the second and third quarters of 2001, hotels on Grand Cayman were expressing their elation with the large number of tourists they were receiving specifically for the Pirates Week festivities that year, which occurred between October 26, and November 3. If anything, this hotel report relayed the understanding that numbers had actually risen for Pirates Week. Organizers of Pirates Week were thus happy to quote that, generally speaking, 'a number of hotels and condominiums [were] saying [that] their arrival numbers were shooting up for the weeks ending 29 October and 4 November.' It is worth quoting the article at length:

Among the hotels, Hyatt is showing 35 to 40 per cent for both weeks; Marriott at 50 per cent for both weeks; Treasure Island at 30 per cent for the first week and 50 per cent for the second; Westin is at 85 to 90 per cent for the first week and 20 per cent for the second; Indies Suites at 65 per cent for both weeks; and Sleep Inn at 30 to 40 per cent for both weeks.

The released information from the Pirates Week office said that Holiday Inn gave no numbers but reported a definite increase in bookings for the first weekend of Pirates Week, though the numbers fall off sharply after that.

The reported percentage occupancy for condos was: Anchorage Condos, 75 per cent; Beach Club Colony, 50 per cent; Britannia Villas, 100 per cent;

²⁰ See ESO, 'Tourism Statistics 2004', at <http://www.eso.ky/pages1.php?page=tourismstatistics>, November 17, 2006; May 6, 2009.

Christopher Columbus, 30 to 40 per cent; Coconut Harbour, 50 per cent; Coral Sands, 75 per cent; Coralstone Club, 75 per cent first week, 41 per cent second week; Discovery Point Club, 25 per cent; George Town Villas, 15 per cent; Island Pine Villas, 12 to 16 per cent; Regal Beach Club, 100 per cent; Seven Mile Beach Resort, 100 per cent; and Silver Sands, 100 per cent.²¹

Despite any noticeable fall in tourist numbers in 2001, then, according to the report, Pirates Week had nonetheless proved itself as a money maker, most notably in the fact that tourists arrivals seemed only to temporarily spike in anticipation of the event. James Bodden's vision, in hindsight, had been put to the ultimate test in 2001 and had seemed to come out undiminished. Indeed, Pirates Week had become an important "cultural" event of the Cayman Islands, and to the point that whenever a hurricane threatened in the ensuing years, the festival was rescheduled accordingly, but never, with the exception of 2004, cancelled. For instance, between November 4 and 9 of 2008, Hurricane Paloma threatened the Cayman Islands with winds in excess of 145 miles per hour. Although the Hurricane hit Cayman Brac, causing tremendous damage in the millions of dollars, Pirates Week was ultimately moved up to within the final ten days of November. Fearing that the festival would not receive a strong turnout, Mr. Martins's subsequent surprise confirmed the importance of Pirates Week as an annual event: "Any time you shift an event in a festival, no matter how much you advertise, the attendance falls off. That didn't

²¹ *Cayman Net News*, 'Pirates Week Looking Good', at <http://www.caymannetnews.com/Archive/Archive%20Articles/October%202001/Issue%20120/Pirates%20Week.html>, October 20, 2001; May 6, 2009.

happen in this case, and it shows the interest in it.”²² Mr. Martins’s words, together with the dedication of the private sector (especially hotels) begins to confirm the vested interest that both the public and private sectors continue to have in promoting Pirates Week and making certain that it is a success.

In further substantiation of the intense collaboration between public and private spheres towards a financially successful Pirates Week “cultural” franchise from fairly early on – that is, the 1970s – the role of the only local government-owned newspaper of the day in any such collaboration should be assessed. In a show of cultural support, *The Caymanian Compass* temporarily modified its name to *Ye Olde Caymanian Compass and Pirates Bulletin* in 1978. *The Compass* was established thirteen years before, in 1965, under the newly formed government agency, The Cayman Free Press. Created by a people moving further and further away from the colonial relationship they had shared with Jamaica for more than 300 years, the Cayman Free Press (publishing its newspaper only three times per week in the 1970s) had established itself as the voice of the Caymanian people from fairly early on; almost from its inception, the government-owned *Caymanian Compass* had dubbed itself the ‘Cayman Islands’...favourite newspaper’, and it is within this amassing localized print tradition, indeed sustained by the press’s collaboration with businesses

²² *The Caymanian Compass*, ‘Pirates Week’s Costume Competition’, at <http://www.caycompass.com/cgi-bin/CFPnews.cgi?ID=1035629>, November 27, 2008; May 6, 2009.

especially, that we begin to appreciate print culture's enduring role in the Caymanians' preoccupation – for better or worse – with historical maritime piracy.²³

In the first instance, the earliest government-run literature on Pirates Week served to evoke an earlier Caymanian piratical time, imposing upon this invocation a potentially profound cultural ambivalence. Thus as such adjectives as 'terrible', 'blood-thirsty', 'marauding', and the like were being applied to pirates, the essential transfiguration of these very adjectives acted somewhat antithetically to the historical interpretation of the pirate as rapist, plunderer, and rogue.²⁴ Striving to instantiate the above, on November 7, 1978, 'blood thirsty invaders' disembarked from their vessel the *Pious Puffin*, and led by pirate 'lonewalk Lockwood, terrorized 'several thousand residents and visitors who jammed the streets of George Town.' Thomas Russell, the then-governor of Cayman, passionately took up the cultural mantle, garbing himself in eighteenth century colonial governor's attire; he represented 'the figure who stood up bravely to confront a fearsome chief pirate 'Mike Villani and his marauding band of Rugger Rogues.'²⁵ In the fictive representation of the pirate of these celebrations, nestled the ambivalence of hatred and love, repulsion and awe, ambivalences which, it remains to be demonstrated, were likely to transcend the celebratory limits of Pirates Week, illuminating the

²³ For a concise history of the formation of Cayman Free Press, see Cayman Free Press, <http://www.caymanfreepress.com/corporate/CFPcaycompass.shtml>, 2004; January 12, 2009.

²⁴ The *Caymanian Compass*, 'Cayman basks in biggest', pp.1-2.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 5,6.

conflicting sentiments of an *actual* projected Caymanian cultural awareness endemically shorn between traditional allegiances and a modern, globalising hope. But, first, let us briefly explore the historical basis for any such ambivalence.

Edward Lucie-Smith and David Cordingly have shown how the treacherous connotations associated with piracy had relaxed by the early nineteenth century, when piracy was almost all but a lingering memory. This relaxation resulted in epic images of the pirate's existence, especially in the area of fictional writing. Indeed, such writings were underpinned by the shaping social mores of the rising European middle-class and its need to erect an epic mythical moral dimension both with which to continue imagining its own preeminence as well as providing a moral framework for the lower classes.²⁶ It has often been expressed that the further one moves away from an abhorrent condition, the more likely one is both to forget the abhorrence and forge new truths – romantic fantasies, if you will – if certain qualities within that prior condition are worthy of emulation. Therefore, the attitudes associated with the pirate's consciousness assumed fantastical importance by this time, especially revealed in the pirate's tenacity in the face of hardship and the uninhibited freedom and autonomy carved from such an existence (certainly not democratic values but the enduring values of the piratical age). Rogues and vagabonds of the sea became

²⁶ See Edward Lucie-Smith, *Outcasts of the Sea* (Hampshire: Paddington Press, 1978), chapter 2; David Cordingly, *Life Among the Pirates: The Romance and the Reality* (London: Abacus, 1996), chapter 4.

fictively popular, either celebrated or condemned in the fictions of Robert Louis Stevenson (*Treasure Island*), or Lord Byron (*The Corsair*), among others writers. Modern understandings of piracy have continued to generate such blockbusters as “Pirates of the Caribbean” and legendary novels like *Peter Pan*; these tales represent but a few of a large number of fictional works that have romanticized historical maritime piracy.

The so-called life of the maritime pirate, redolent with mystique, intrigue, and romanticism, was embossed upon the *Compass's* advertisements – mostly taken out by establishments in the private sector – from as early as 1978. Merren's Department Store boldly headed the newspaper advertisement ‘Pirates gather your booty at Merren's’, and the Swiss Inn Restaurant put on a ‘Blackbeard's Special’. Cayman Brac's Reef Hotel urged tourists to ‘chart their course’ to ‘the Brac’ for a few days to ‘enjoy the festivities of Pirates Week in relaxed elegance...’; to make this offer even more appealing, the inter-island Red Carpet airlines offered ‘special excursion fares of \$29 round trip from Grand Cayman to Cayman Brac all [Pirates] week [long]...to allow as many visitors as possible to enjoy Cayman Brac...’. A nubile young lady, donning a black scallywag pirate's cap and a contrastingly tight-fitting white dress beckoned all on behalf of Lin-Jan's Student World to ‘come and get [their] hats, T-shirts, flags, bags and much more for Pirates Week.’²⁷ In the twenty-first century,

²⁷ The *Caymanian Compass*, November 7, 1978, pp. 5, 6, 7.

private businesses in Cayman indeed continue to invest in Pirates Week, from L.J's Beauty Salon,²⁸ to Breezes by the Bay waterfront bar,²⁹ to authorized car dealers.³⁰ Anticipating great profit to be made during Pirates Week, the private sector prove willing promoters of the current thematic ambivalence of historical maritime piracy.

Within this thematic ambivalence rests a capitalist economic doctrine. A doctrine of this nature is dependent on the forces of free enterprise, forces which try tirelessly to limit moralistic governmental controls on a local economy; accordingly, private companies strive to reserve the right to impose their own economic sensibilities as long as these fall within accepted standards of business ethics.³¹ As a prime example here, we may say that Walt Disney imposed his own economic judgement on an American capitalistic society with regard to the promotion of historical maritime piracy. Disney had come to realize the great profit to be made in the his 1953 adaptation of J.M. Barrie's Peter Pan, a tale about a little boy who embarks on fantastical adventures in Never Land as leader of the Lost Boys. According to one critic, the 'portion of...Barrie's mythos of Peter Pan that is best known to most readers' has to do with the antagonistic pirate Captain Hook who besets upon the

²⁸ The *Caymanian Compass*, June 12, 2003, p.4.

²⁹ The *Caymanian Compass*, May 4, 2005, p.7.

³⁰ The *Caymanian Compass*, July 4, 2002, p.5.

³¹ See, for instance, John Steiner *et al*, *Business, Government, and Society* (Boston: McGraw-Hill Irwin, 2009, 12th edition), pp. 186-217.

Lost Boys;³² this critique has effectively captured the indispensability of the pirate figure in Peter Pan, a figure that echoes the cruelty of historical maritime piracy but which nonetheless continues to elicit great excitement in the popular cultural imagination at present. Returning to Cayman's Pirates Week, it can therefore be initially argued that the national idea of the pirate, for better or worse, has gained a great deal of financial currency from a developing nationalized print culture working in collaboration with a modern, capitalistic society geared towards profit-making. To go a step further, the collaboration between the Cayman Islands government and a free and open market economy with regard to historical maritime piracy, indeed continues to be generated by the growing Caymanian appreciation for tourism. This collaboration together with its concomitant appreciation opens up vital avenues into any Caymanian sense of its cultural identity in decidedly modern terms.

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When the Pirates Week office proclaims Pirates Week to be a unique cultural event, questions of culture are inevitably bound to arise. Culture finds its superlative manifestation in acts of affirmation, and if certain Caymanians partake in the festivities of Pirates Week, are they affirming a culture premised merely on an economic doctrine or something more? Consider in this instance the words of former governor of the Cayman Islands, Stuart Jack, written in 2009:

³² See Randy Constan, 'Peter Pan in Kensington Gardens', at <http://www.lyricsfreak.com/p/peter+pan/biography.html>, 2006; February 16, 2008.

Pirates are part of Cayman's tourist brand – the emblem of Cayman Airways is Sir Turtle, one of whose legs is wooden and definitely reminiscent of Long John Silver from "Treasure Island" (the name of one of the resort hotels).

In fact there is little evidence of Cayman's involvement with pirates. These islands, unlike the Bahamas or Port Royal in Jamaica, were never a pirate base. A history of Caribbean piracy which I have only mentions Cayman once.³³

Mr. Jack is keen to establish the line between fact and fiction with regard to Caymanian culture, history, and maritime piracy. According to him, the pirate does not represent a genuine aspect of Cayman's historical culture, but has been secured as an enduring symbol of Cayman's tourist brand. In light of this symbolism, Mr. Jack's understandings of piracy in Cayman's context in this instance stems from his remembrance of Robert Louis Stevenson's 1883 novel *Treasure Island*, in which the protagonist Jim Hawkins finds himself in search of buried pirates' treasure, in the process having to fight for his very life against Long John Silver and his cohorts, men whom Hawkins had hired to help locate that treasure. Mr. Jack's mention of the fictional Long John Silver immediately evokes, for me, *that* pirate's ambivalent sense of morality and thus can be effectively juxtaposed with the thematic ambivalence associated with the romanticizing of the historical maritime pirate in the present (see pp. 301-304) ; this brand of romanticism seamlessly connects with the sensibilities

³³ Stuart Jack's blog, 'Cayman History: Fact and Fiction', in Foreign and Commonwealth Office, United Kingdom, http://blogs.fco.gov.uk/roller/jack/entry/cayman_history_fact_and_fiction, November 16, 2009; April 29, 2010.

and desires of a capitalistic economic doctrine – of which tourism may play a vital role – in the sense that romanticized piracy has brought great amounts of profit to Cayman's economy. Nonetheless, one gets the impression that traditional-minded Caymanians would be inclined to agree with Mr. Jack's ultimate idea that piracy does not represent authentic Caymanianness. Yet what of the more modern-thinking Caymanian, who is aware of the importance of tourism and incoming influences – even romanticized history – on a Caymanian cultural way of life?

In the initial analysis, the more modern-thinking Caymanian is likely to accept Pirates Week for both its historical and modern sensibilities, if to disparate degrees; let us consider the words of the following Caymanian blogger who goes by the name Mighty Afroditee, hereafter referred to as Afroditee:

Pirates' Week originated as a celebration of the cultural heritage of the Cayman Islands. Albeit, in my age old cynicism, I have always found it curious that the Islands have never actively acknowledged its slave history, though we do laud the raping and pillaging of the pirates. Needless to say, it is here, and it is mine, so I will keep it, inconsistencies and all.³⁴

The brunt of this Caymanian's cultural expressions betrays a marked honesty; Afroditee is aware of the downplayed importance of slavery on the Caymanian cultural landscape, an awareness which signals a deeper awareness of the shaping

³⁴ The Mighty Afroditee, 'Pirates Week', at <http://mightyafroditee.blogspot.com/2006/11/pirates-week.html>, November 20, 2006; May 1, 2010.

legacies of institutionalized slavery; this respondent, in the initial analysis, has fleetingly acknowledged an integral part of Cayman's historical circumstance and in the process has demonstrated her own national and cultural connection with slavery. Yet with regard to Pirates Week, Afroditee's cultural conviction lies not so much in the past, but in the perceived fact that Pirates Week is truly Caymanian; her expressions here segue into a reasonable logic that since Pirates Week was created by a Caymanian and it takes place on Cayman soil, it should be considered Caymanian. Afroditee's possessive cultural intent conforms to my earlier argument in Section 4.2 that modern-thinking Caymanians are more likely to interpret certain aspects of their cultural selves against the present and not the past; in this way, although such Caymanians may have a working understanding of their past, they are more inclined to define themselves against a present sensibility, unlike their traditional counterparts. Afroditee is indeed in the process of defending Pirates Week as distinctly Caymanian, a defense that becomes infused with cultural meaning. Her cultural line of defense, if you will, begins to implicate cultural ideas and understandings that have indeed gathered momentum from a decidedly narrower intention to draw tourists to Cayman in the low season.

Mr. Martins provides a modern logic for any such cultural momentum:

To the people involved in the present pulling and tugging [with regards to Pirates Week], my only advice is that rancour and intransigence don't lead anywhere. Look at what's in front of you and at what the indications are.

Cultural choice is the most powerful social force in the world; it dominates all political, economic and social decisions. In this case, as in others, it will eventually settle the question.³⁵

Mr. Martins's logic seems to be targeting traditionalist Caymanians; the pulling and tugging of which he speaks comes not from a modern mindset intent on living in the "here and now," but from the traditionalist Caymanians' seeming obsession to live according to a past sensibility when their current prosperous existence is substantively antithetical to *that* past. We have seen in Section 4.2 how many traditionalist Caymanians hold the view that as established Caymanians they have certain rights that expatriates would and *should* not have; because they are Caymanians with an ancestry rooted in the Cayman Islands it is their God-given right to push (and pull) for the numerical and cultural preservation of the Caymanian race. Yet although Mr. Martins and Afroditee are culturally aware individuals, we do not get the impression from them that they are keen to impose their cultural sense of entitlement on others like their traditionalist counterparts: Afroditee seems unconcerned with the foreign elements that have helped to define Pirates Week, and Mr. Martins is more inclined towards a sense of fairness that guides any equally healthy sense of multiculturalism. According to Charles Taylor *et al.*, this sense of an ostensibly selfless individuality and/or fairness is all too often

³⁵ Dave Martins, 'Letter to the Editor: let cultural choice decide on Batabano', in *Cayman Net News*, at <http://www.caymannetnews.com/Archive/Archive%20Articles/June%202003/Issue%20426%20Wed/426-stories.html>, June 20, 2003; May 5, 2010.

overlooked by the host nationality, which often fails 'to recognize or respect the particular cultural identities of [all] citizens.'³⁶ These scholars also point to the fact that although multiculturalism is a standard feature of many democratic societies, the disrespect and marginalization of certain expatriates and their cultural ways renders multiculturalism unfair and bereft of any globalising rights as Susan George meant it.³⁷ Yet where Alvin Schmidt would argue that any such marginalization most likely occurs because expatriates refuse to assimilate into the host culture,³⁸ Mr. Martins exhibits a democratic, modern idea that cultures should coexist peacefully, and given her unconcern with incoming cultural sensibilities in this instance, Afroditee, as we shall see below, begins to demonstrate that she is functioning within Mr. Martins's logic.

Indeed, a postmodern intention drives Mr. Martins's logic, where postmodernism stresses equality among all people in spite of cultural orientation. According to Frederic Jameson, this postmodern logic occurs because of the driving forces of capitalism and globalisation; yet although postmodernism should represent an essentially fair way of seeing others and their own cultural and political spheres of sensibilities, Jameson nonetheless stresses that postmodern ways of thinking are

³⁶ Charles Taylor *et al.*, *Multiculturalism: Examining the Politics of Recognition* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), p.3.

³⁷ See section 1, pp. 50-51

³⁸ Alvin Schmidt, *The Menace of Multiculturalism: Trojan Horse in America* (Westport: Praeger Publishers, 1997), chapters 4, 7 and 8.

bound to engender structural dilemmas in any modern, democratic society.³⁹ Structural dilemmas, in the context of this study, point to the ways in which differing or conflicting sentiments underpin societal actualities, from actualities based on the largely self-impelled multicultural idea of living in Cayman for financial benefit, to living there because one feels a traditional sense of belonging to the land. Indeed, the dilemma here is essentially located in the fact that these actualities and their corresponding modern and traditional conditions are at odds with each other; the traditionalist especially would say that they are mutually exclusive. Yet are such dilemmas limited only to the linear, age-old battle between traditional and modern thinking? Or, is modern Caymanian thought, with regard to a decidedly postmodern equity of expression and thought, by omission or otherwise, also likely to contribute to any structural dilemma by, in the initial analysis, being either tranquil or confrontational in its expressions?

Consider again my first Caymanian respondent, Afroditee: although she does not express the need for cultural equity in as many words, she is not in the process of condemning any other cultural way that is not, in her opinion, Caymanian; this essentially sets her apart from Caymanians like Patricia Estwick (see Section 4.2, pp.274-275) who is more inclined to quickly verbalize her distrust of incoming cultural sensibilities. Yet Afroditee is clearly defending Pirates Week as “hers”, even

³⁹ Frederic Jameson, *Postmodernism, or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1991), chapter 3.

in spite of that festival's historical inaccuracies. By not condemning any other culture while defending the legitimacy of *her* Pirates Week, Afroditee is not working within a xenophobic intention but one inclined on defending a cultural way forged in the shaping present. Afroditee's expressions here are ultimately unperturbed in that she is simply speaking her mind without lamenting on the destructive nature of Mr. Martins's 'pull and tug' between traditionalist and modern thinking.⁴⁰ In practical terms, Afroditee's willingness to privilege the cultural phenomenon of Pirates Week reflects a wider philosophical shift: in upholding Pirates Week as distinctly Caymanian, she has revealed the extent to which those like her have undergone a philosophical shift that their traditionalist equivalents have not yet undergone; this shift is dependent not only on the Caymanian support of Pirates Week, but on the ways in which a present condition continues to inform a way of thinking that tends to deemphasize any "pure" historical connection with the present.⁴¹

Thus we should anticipate that where Afroditee's cultural opinion here undergirds a cultural way of life that is, in the moment of utterance, concerned with nothing other than itself, there is another brand of modern cultural thinking that is likely to be more confrontational towards a traditionalist mindset. One would argue that therein lies the structural dilemma within modern Caymanian thought in this case: the likes

⁴⁰ See footnote 35.

⁴¹ Cf. James Smith, *Who's Afraid of Postmodernism? Taking Derrida, Lyotard, and Foucault to Church* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic, 2006), chapter 1.

of Afroditee, in this instance, espouses an inward, reflective gaze, while the more confrontational Caymanian, as we shall see, would be keener to express that a Caymanian cultural way of life is being decimated from within the ranks of Caymanianness. However, in keeping with the proposed definition of structural dilemmas, are these differing modes of cultural expression ideologically underpinning different intentions or ways of life? Or do they, unbeknownst to their expressers, return to the same truths? I interrogate this idea further as my arguments here expand and conclude.

Focussing now on the more confrontational modern-thinking Caymanian, let us look at James M Bodden III. Mr. Bodden slams those detractors of Pirates Week as representative of 'finicky voices [who] claim that we should not identify with pirates...' He goes on to state that '...the fact still remains that pirates are a part of our [Caymanian] history, as well as a part of the history of the West Indies.'⁴² Let us continue to consider Mr. Bodden's cultural conviction with regards to Pirates Week:

Pirates Week has not been without its controversy. There have been debates about the name and theme. There have also been objections to the fact that people dance and drink in the street to the accompaniment of very loud music. Regardless of the objections, to those who have grown up with Pirates Week it has not only survived but evolved to mean a special time of year

⁴² James M Bodden III, 'Commentary: Prepare for the Pirates', in *Cayman Net News*, http://www.caymannetnews.com/archivist.php?news_id=3012&pageaction=showdetail&news_id=3012&arcyyear=2007&arcmonth=10&arcdays=29, October 29, 2007; April 29, 2009.

when the people of Cayman enjoy themselves in a festival that is of their own making.⁴³

In the first instance, unperturbed and confrontational cultural opinions of Pirates Week seem to return to the understanding that the festival should be considered Caymanian because Caymanians created it, an understanding which, for the moment, does not betray any dilemmas, but works to ideologically connect these opinions. However, we should remain aware that Mr. Bodden's intimation is necessarily more confrontational than Afroditee's because of the tone that underpins his social commentary: in demonstrating his angst with traditionalist Caymanians, Mr. Bodden is decrying the potential loss of a Caymanian cultural way. Like Caymanian traditionalists who lament the loss of a way of life (see Section 3.2.2), Mr. Bodden is in the process of striving to prevent the loss of what he perceives to be a uniquely Caymanian cultural activity. Like Afroditee, Mr. Bodden is clearly working within Mr. Martins's modern ideology in the sense that Mr. Bodden's acceptance of Pirates Week points to his subconscious acceptance of the foreign elements of Pirates Week; indeed, we have seen earlier where the intention of Pirates Week's founder was to create something uniquely Caymanian by borrowing from other carnivals in the western hemisphere. Thus in confirming the Caymanianness of Pirates Week, Mr. Bodden is perhaps unwittingly countenancing the great extent to which other

⁴³ 'Cayman Celebrates 25 years of Pirates Week', in *Cayman Net News*, <http://www.caymannetnews.com/Archive/Archive%20Articles/June2001/Issue90/Cayman.html>, June 20, 2001; May 4, 2009.

“outside” cultural sensibilities have been adopted towards a successful cultural event.

We look at the historical origins of carnival as my arguments expand to include Batabano, but we should at this point appreciate that Pirates Week can also be construed by the more modern-thinking Caymanian in romanticized historical terms. Let us consider Mr. Bodden’s expression of Pirates Week on a somewhat pseudo-historical level. His idea that pirates constituted a part of Cayman’s history is factual enough, but given that Cayman never truly represented a pirates’ lair like the Bahamas or Jamaica, what cultural effect did maritime piracy really have on the development of Caymanian identity? Indeed, George Hirst would say that the settling Caymanian exhibited piratical tendencies in their proclivity to wreck, an assessment which eighteenth-century Spanish captain Don Tirri would agree with (see section 2.3, pp.66-67). If such expressions do not prove that piracy substantively figured in Cayman’s history, they do at least conform to Mr. Bodden’s understanding that historical maritime piracy can be associated with Caymanian history and indeed the history of the wider Caribbean. Yet to what extent here is Mr. Bodden considering the brutal actuality of historical maritime piracy? Or, has he unwittingly confirmed the hidden economics of piracy on historical Cayman, if not in quite the same way that Peter Leeson meant it. Indeed, Leeson stresses that any hidden – or illicit – economy generated by historical maritime piracy served a

decidedly selfish interest.⁴⁴ However, if we are to momentarily abide by Hirst's idea that Caymanian wreckers were settled pirates, then any hidden economics associated with the former's lifestyle, in light of historical Cayman's economic sluggishness, would have served an altogether different intent. According to Captain Tirri's own damning account of Caymanian wreckers, it is not difficult to envisage that sometimes wrecking ran the risk of transcending putative legal protocol, instead assuming an isolated and private legal system which, in the Caymanian historical context, stressed livelihood. Is Mr. Bodden thus aware of the possible imprint of the piratical on Caymanian history in terms of his ancestors' survival? And if so, does this not paint the influence of piracy in somewhat of a positive light in that the piratical actually helped Caymanian seamen and their families survive? Such questions do not appear to drive Mr. Bodden's cultural opinions here. Rather, his professed cultural-historical right to identify with piracy hints more at his fundamental unawareness of the ideological and cultural disjuncture between romantic piracy and actual piracy; he speaks doubly of piracy in decidedly romanticized ways. In the first sense, by not including the abhorrent aspect of maritime piracy, Mr. Bodden has not given an authentic account of its historical past; and, secondly, by tying his under-explained view of piracy to the present idea that Pirates Week is of the Caymanians' making, we realize the subconscious extent of the disjuncture between past and present towards the privileging of a present

⁴⁴ See Peter Leeson, *The Invisible Hook: The Hidden Economics of Pirates* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009), pp.4-5.

sensibility. In other words, Mr. Bodden's reliance on the piratical as historically Caymanian seems to have been refracted through the romantic gaze of Pirates Week, thereby placing his cultural understandings more in the creative present, keeping in mind also that the creative present is symptomatic of the multicultural effects and impulses of globalisation.

Indeed, it is strictly within the context of the creative Caymanian present that both unperturbed and confrontational modern ideas of Pirates Week are compatible with the *wholly* benign and intensely un-cultural sentiments of tourists who have participated in Pirates Week; un-cultural in the sense that tourists do not have a vested interest in facilitating and furthering cultural Caymanianness. For instance, festival prize trip winners Jacqueline Jacques and David Lenzian of Florida, in 2007, expressed their Pirates Week experience as "...fantastic." "We can't wait to tell our friends about this", Ms. Jacques remarked. Although the couple's recommendation of Pirates Week is rather brief and in no way culturally specific, their obvious enthusiasm feeds into a positive cultural understanding of the festival like that of Mr. Bodden or even Shomari Scott, Deputy Director and International Marketing for the Department of Tourism. Implicating Ms. Jacques and Mr. Lenzian's residual excitement of having won an all-expense paid trip to the 2007 Pirates Week festival, Ms. Scott assumes dual roles as Deputy Director and proud cultural Caymanian: 'We are pleased that these Florida residents were able to visit the Islands during our

annual Pirates Week Festival and to experience Caymanian culture at its greatest.’⁴⁵

So too would Julia Sakamoto and her husband, who are residents of Utah, have also fueled any existing romantic understanding of Pirates Week as intensely cultural. In 2006, the couple had briefly visited Grand Cayman on a stop-over cruise; at the Pirates Week Office gift shop, they were persuaded to fill out an entry form and subsequently won an all-expense paid trip to Pirates Week 2007 for five days. Mr. Sakamoto ‘said they were particularly impressed by the fireworks show on the first weekend of the festival.’ “‘We also enjoyed all that local food; it was wonderful’”, he concluded.⁴⁶ Such tourist expressions can add further legitimacy to modern Caymanian cultural ideas about Pirates Week; in other words, the success of Pirates Week in tourism terms is in harmony with the foregoing cultural expressions, which have focused on the legitimacy of this celebration, and thus can act as legitimising functions of energy that can be channeled by modern-thinking Caymanians. In cultural and current terms, Pirates Week has become a trendy fad, and that its success stems from the very reason that it was created, we anticipate that this success helps to provide the basis for any subsequent cultural momentum.⁴⁷

⁴⁵*Cayman Net News*, ‘Prize trip winners express joy’, at http://www.caymannetnews.com/archivelist.php?news_id=3576&pageaction=showdetail&news_id=3576&arcyear=2007&arcmonth=11&arcday=21, November 21, 2007; April 29, 2009.

⁴⁶*Cayman Net News*, ‘Visitors describe local food as “wonderful”’, at http://www.caymannetnews.com/archivelist.php?news_id=3531&pageaction=showdetail&news_id=3531&arcyear=2007&arcmonth=11&arcday=20, November 20, 2007; April 29, 2009.

⁴⁷ Cf. Andy Crouch, *Culture Making: Recovering our Creative Calling* (Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2001), chapters 1 and 3.

In conclusion, we may here say that both tranquil and confrontational modern sentiments with regard to Pirates Week speak to a sense of cultural awareness in the present more so than in the past, an actuality that ultimately serves to bring these sentiments together instead of driving them into any dilemma or struggle. The modern idea of cultural origin can be applied to Walter Benjamin's own idea that implicit in the concept of origins rests 'that which emerges out of the process of becoming and disappearing.'⁴⁸ All of my foregoing Caymanian respondents, by their very expressions, exhibit cultural ideas of becoming and disappearing: my more tranquil respondent, Afroditee, has demonstrated, in my opinion, that although the inconsistencies enshrined in Pirates Week represent a disjuncture between cultural past and present, these very inconsistencies are what drive her own current cultural awareness as a Caymanian; this indicates an understanding vaguely premised on a historical circumstance – for she does summon the idea of Caymanian heritage – which was responsible for becoming Caymanian, but more so on latent ideas of the “disappearing” past in the continued effort to build on a “becoming” Caymanianness: the past, although expressed, does not particularly matter to Afroditee, who is keen to enjoy the present sensibilities of Pirates Week. Thus her seemingly nonexistent understandings of her own Caymanian origins in relation to Pirates Week especially speaks to the rapid disappearance of historical specificity and a continual sense of becoming rooted in the creative present.

⁴⁸ Quoted in Susan Buck-Morss, *The Dialectics of Seeing: Walter Benjamin and the Arcades Project* (Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1991), p.8.

Although the cultural opinions of Mr. Bodden and Mr. Martins incorporate a more analytical approach to ideas of culture than Afroditee's, these opinions also do not rely so much on the past as the present. Mr. Martins stresses the naturalness of cultural borrowing in a multicultural world driven by globalisation, while Mr. Bodden, although relaying a somewhat unsatisfying Caymanian historical connection with piracy, seems to be relying more on the romantic underpinnings of that past rather than that past itself; his historical words come across more as token expressions rooted in the present than a true desire to tie past to present. Thus both men are also in the process of subordinating the past to the present in explicating their own Caymanianness; subordinations of this nature speak not only to cultural ideas rooted in the present, but draw attention to the Caymanian creative sense in that present. Their words would thus find agreement with the likes of Caymanian Bill Schiller, who has professed that any such Caymanian creativity will, in and of itself, further an 'awareness of Caymanian culture.'⁴⁹ This awareness, in turn, argues another Caymanian, will secure 'our uniqueness [and will allow] those who come among us [to be] immediately become aware of the value of our homeland communities.'⁵⁰ Present here is a potent relationship between the modern desire to stress the Caymanians' uniqueness and the hyper-profitable tourism, a relationship that hardly seems to rely on the historical or traditional bases of Caymanian culture.

⁴⁹ Bill Schiller, 'Cayman Style Cayfest's "Fresh! Cayman Coutre"', in *Cayman Net News*, at <http://www.caymannetnews.com/news-15193--6-6---.html>, May 1, 2009; May 3, 2009.

⁵⁰ A. Steve McField, 'History: A country we cannot lose', in *Cayman Net News*, at http://www.caymannetnews.com/archivelist.php?news_id=12422&pageaction=showdetail&news_id=12422&arcyear=2008&arcmonth=12&arcday=21, December 21, 2008; May 2, 2009.

Having established the essential similarities between unperturbed and confrontational modern thought with regard to Pirates Week, we now look at how traditionalist expressions in relation to the same festival are likely to break with such thoughts.

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Based on fifty distributed questionnaires that seek to get the Caymanians' view on what exactly makes one a Caymanian, many established Caymanians, from the ostensibly carefree teenager to the elderly, believe that they have a unique and distinct culture. When questioned, all of the Caymanians that I dealt with confirmed those qualities which contributed to the makings of a true Caymanian: having a "real" Caymanian accent, being of Caymanian parentage, having been born in the Cayman Islands, and possessing an intimate knowledge of Caymanian history proved the most popular responses.⁵¹ However, in the continuing effort to confirm my posit that a traditionalist cultural Caymanian sentimental component does indeed exist beside a more modern counterpart with regard to Pirates Week, I wish to look at the final "Caymanian" quality of the above list, that of possessing an intimate knowledge of Caymanian history: only three of the six Caymanians that I interviewed extensively expressed, without prompt, any fleeting historical awareness of a piratical presence on historical Cayman soil. First, Hope Stephenson attempts to speak on behalf of her fellow Caymanians when she says, 'we all know

⁵¹ See appendix A for the questionnaire 'what makes a Caymanian?'

that there was racketeering around here [at that time in history]’;⁵² Gregory Mclean offers a slightly fuller response: ‘Pirates used to use the Cayman Islands as a stop-off point, but they never settled here.’⁵³ The remaining five respondents, with the remainder of one – Albert Christian – who is assessed just below, only focused on the sixth phase of Caymanian history, offering no knowledge of Caymanian history before about 1900.

Nonetheless, the pronouncements of Mr. McLean and Mrs. Stephenson are important explicators of traditional Caymanianness with its emphasis on honor in the midst of an unassuming life. Both informants are not inclined to view historical maritime piracy as an enduring part of traditional Caymanian culture because, I suspect, of the atrocities that are associated with it; this sets them apart from the likes of James Bodden III, who readily acknowledges the piratical effect on historical Caymanianness if in a rather distorted way. Nonetheless, Mr. McLean and Mrs. Stephenson are attempting to remove the traditional Caymanian cultural self from the very historical possibility of the influence of piracy on it, an effort which seems to have taken precedence over any actual sincere consideration of the very *effect* of piracy on early Caymanian identity. ‘Well, honestly’, begins an anonymous informant, after I asked if she believed that Caymanians had pirates’ blood flowing in their veins, ‘I don’t think that the pirate’s aspect of [history] was really what

⁵² Personal Interview with Hope Stephenson, May 7, 2007, p. 3.

⁵³ Personal Interview with Gregory McLean, May 8, 2007, p.4.

[Caymanians] did in the past.’ This Caymanian is seemingly unaware of the fact that early Caymanian seamen were substantively characterized by a keen, often negative, wreck-plundering ability; indeed, it was Spanish captain Don Tirri who in 1797 referred to them as fisherfolk masquerading as pirates (see Section 2.3). When I proceeded to ask yet another informant about her views on Pirates Week and the likelihood of a historical-cultural link between piracy and Caymanianness, her responses also negated such a link if with a decidedly greater traditionalist passion:

Christopher Williams: They have [several] days of celebrations [that is, Pirates Week celebrations] here...Do you think that these celebrations—

Informant: I don’t believe in it! I do not believe in it!

CW: I was going to ask if these celebrations represent a true aspect of Caymanian culture.

Informant: No, not Caymanian culture! Because, I mean, it’s [piracy], and I don’t agree or partake in [these celebrations], and I don’t want anything to do with it...it is not a [part of the] culture of the Cayman Islands; I don’t know who brought it here!⁵⁴

Another respondent offers a more philosophical response: ‘[i]s there any moral reason for celebrating piracy? One must admit that the portrayal of pirate clothing

⁵⁴ Personal interview with Anonymous Interviewee two, May 9, 2007, p.4-5.

(sometimes their victim's belongings) is quaint and somewhat romantic, but is that sufficient reason to glorify these lunatic serial killers?'⁵⁵ A distinct moral outlook tempers the tone of the two previous informants. The first informant clearly establishes herself as a traditionalist Caymanian in her abhorrence of a historical aspect that is intensely antithetical to a purist, traditional Caymanian thought. By stressing that Pirates Week does not represent a true aspect of Caymanian culture, this Caymanian has unwittingly invoked an us/them binary – the honorable Caymanian and the dishonorable pirate. Likewise, by implying that the 'intemperate [and] filthy' existence of the pirate is antithetical to a Caymanian cultural way, the second informant has positioned herself as culturally opposite to such categories of historical existence; more importantly, however, is the way in which her expressed sense of outrage provides a compelling segue into the societal negatives 'inherent' in modern Cayman society.

Any such societal negatives are especially illuminated in the personality of Miss Dolly, a well-known activist for the traditional Caymanian "way." Miss Dolly has condemned Pirates Week as intensely hedonistic, and somewhat responsible for Cayman's moral decline and criminal increase; in addition, she expresses that 'Pirates Week [does not represent] the true culture of the Cayman Islands.'⁵⁶ 'We

⁵⁵ Name withheld by request, 'Pirates: lunatic serial killers' in *The Caymanian Compass* (October 25, 1996), p. 4.

⁵⁶ Miss Dolly's sentiments were taken from Dwayne Sterling Ebanks (host), *Talk Today Live*, Radio Cayman, October 8, 2008.

need to get rid of Pirates Week', she continues, '...[and by continuing to] celebrate stealing and killing [what piracy represents], we are planting seeds [of destruction] and this is the crap we're getting [that is, a society in moral decline]!' Miss Dolly's angst here comes largely from the recent death of Mrs. Estella Scott-Roberts, a pioneering activist for abused women, whose body was repeatedly raped and then set alight in late 2008, burning her beyond recognition.⁵⁷ According to Miss Dolly, Cayman's gathering lawlessness is the ultimate cause of Mrs. Roberts' death, and here she implicates Pirates Week for its "demoralizing," "lewd," and culturally false properties. Like twenty-five of my questionnaire informants over the age of forty-six, Miss Dolly has, in an ideological sense, demonstrated a connection between the loss of a truly Caymanian, traditional way of life and the moral decline of Cayman society.

Given their cultural ire, not only have the foregoing informants condemned Pirates Week as antithetically foreign to a Caymanian cultural way of life, but in their words rests the urgent implication that something 'must be done about this.' In the words of Jacob McTaggart '[i]t's time to put our foot down and stop this [Pirates Week and other pervading foreign influences upon Caymanian culture]...We have lost our cultural identity, and sadly, we Caymanians aren't doing enough to stop...[this].'⁵⁸

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸ Jacob McTaggart, 'Save Identity of Cayman', in the *Caymanian Compass*, <http://www.caycompass.com/cgi-bin/CFPnews.cgi?ID=1037345>, February 9, 2009; May 5, 2009.

‘How long will you go between two opinions?’ implores Bridget Glasgow-Scott in similar fashion. ‘If the Lord is God then serve Him: but if “piracy” and evil is your God then follow him. Year after year some of us Christians pray that the Lord would “rain out Pirates Week”...[Pirates] steal, kill, rape and commit all kinds of evil towards humanity. Is that what the Cayman Islands are famous for?’⁵⁹

The Caymanians that I have just dealt with are expressing themselves as traditionalists given their condemnation of cultural and moral forces that are perceived to be at odds with a Caymanian way of life and identity forged in an earlier time (see Section 3.2.2). Yet, as was demonstrated in Section 4.2, culture need not only rest in immediate historical considerations but extend to national characteristics perceived to be distinctly Caymanian; it is true that such characteristics would represent evolutions of earlier ones steeped in historical circumstance, an evolution which – perceived or otherwise – indeed makes it possible for Caymanians to attempt to authenticate cultural characteristics being manifested in the present. Thus the loss of Caymanian cultural identity, in light of traditionalist interpretations of Pirates Week, reveals the extent to which the foregoing Caymanians are in the dual process of lamentation and reclamation of Caymanian culture. Quite vociferous and purist in nature, I argue that this dual

⁵⁹ Bridget Glasgow-Scott, ‘Letter: Piracy versus God’s mercy’, in *Cayman Net News*, http://www.caymannetnews.com/archivelist.php?news_id=11073&pageaction=showdetail&news_id=11073&arcyear=2008&arcmonth=10&arcday=30, October 30, 2008; May 3, 2009.

cultural role not only promotes a lost Caymanian cultural way, but potentially leads to a culture of intolerance with xenophobic underpinnings.

In the initial analysis, the traditional idealism which both Miss Dolly and Mrs. Glasgow-Scott hold for their country is at once reconcilable with their perception of the lewdness and/or debauchery of Pirates Week. Mr. McTaggart all but implies that such a reconciliation would amount to a spirited Caymanian defence against “negative” incoming cultural ways (see pp.326-327). In other words, once Caymanians are able to reify the connection between their loss of identity and incoming cultural sensibilities responsible for this loss, their subsequent stance *should* amount to “putting their foot down.” We may therefore say that this particular hard-lined, intolerant brand of Caymanian sentiment would be keen to ask why it is that Pirates Week has been able to assume the national importance it has, when its multicultural logic is clearly at odds with authentic Caymanianness. Herein lies the structural dilemma between traditional and modern thinking (see previous subsection).

As we continue to explore the basis for this traditionalist Caymanian culture of intolerance, let us look at the ways in which young hardworking Caymanian Albert Christian foregrounds what I view as an inherent cultural paradox: he expresses that ‘[we celebrate Pirates Week] as a celebration we [do] not understand...[we do not

understand] the true meaning of piracy.’⁶⁰ Mr. Christian’s verbalization, together with the intimations of my other traditionalist Caymanian respondents, at this point provides an appropriate segue into what I consider to be the cultural logic of traditional Caymanianness with regard to historical maritime piracy. That most of the Caymanians that I interviewed expressed outrage at my consideration of the piratical as part of their sacred and unassuming history and culture, one wonders why the issue of piracy, even in its romantic, financially beneficial state, elicits such cultural ire; it is as if the automatic traditional Caymanian rejection of piracy seems to be rooted in the Caymanians’ history, a rejection, no doubt, begun in Cayman’s fourth phase, well after the age of piracy and at a time when Cayman’s economy was quite meager and paltry and its people, unassuming and hardworking. We thus begin to understand the reasons for such a cultural negation in the historical figure of Jamaica’s governor, Lord Sligo, from 1834 to 1836. Writing in 1835, Governor Sligo vented his disgust with Caymanians, referring to them as a ‘lawless people.’ It was the irate governor’s next words, however, that would impugn what older Caymanians in the present have continued to say about the essential nature of historical Caymanianness: ‘I feel very strongly the necessity of immediate [and] firm interference to prevent these descendants of the old Buccaneers from becoming as injurious to Society, or nearly so, as their Predecessors [and] Ancestors were.’⁶¹ As

⁶⁰Personal Interview with Albert Christian Interview, May 5, 2007, p. 2.

⁶¹ See Despatch No. 43, March 8, 1835, PRO, CO 137/198, ff. 44-51; for a decidedly Caymanian interpretation of the foregoing see, for instance, *Cayman Net News*, ‘History: The Pedro St. James

Governor Sligo condemned Caymanians at this time, Cayman's elected leadership and major inhabitants demonstrated their rejection of this image. They demonstrated, through correspondences with the colonial office in Jamaica, that they were not descendants of Buccaneers at all, but legitimate British men and women in a colony 'in the anomalous position of being without laws, of any sort, without any form of government [and] without any person with any title to preeminence.'⁶² And according to the three Caymanian Magistrates at the time, the British Crown's perpetual lack of administrative concern had engendered their powerlessness 'to enforce obedience to the laws...for want of assistance to protect them.'⁶³ Therefore, it was the "reluctance" of the Jamaican government to 'effect a Measure of...Legislative Union in such a form as to give it the aspect and weight of legitimate Authority', which *really* rendered Cayman lawless and not the possibility that inchoate Caymanians had pirate's blood in their veins, so to speak;⁶⁴ the politically conscious element of a historical Caymanianness back then had managed to convince itself that Cayman's lawlessness was a direct symptom of this abandonment, and nothing else.

My foregoing respondents thus provide a sentimental continuity with their nineteenth-century ancestors. The imperative of both temporal human elements of

Rebellion of 1831 (Fifth and Final Part), at

http://www.caymannetnews.com/article.php?news_id=11552, November 16, 2008; May 5, 2010.

⁶² PRO, CO 137/198, ff. 44-51.

⁶³ See From Sligo to CO, August 12, 1834, PRO, CO 137/192, No. 15.

⁶⁴ See footnote 61.

Caymanianness is clearly invested in the idea that Caymanianness *never* had a piratical component. Indeed, my respondents' desire to remove themselves from historical maritime piracy and any romanticized version of it stems from damning historical considerations of piracy. It could also be argued that they know about the negativity of historical piracy by having read about it, but given the ostensibly visceral employment of the Caymanian binary understanding of piracy (us/them, Caymanian/pirate), there is no denying a decidedly historically invested component to these traditionalist sentimentalities: thus not only do these Caymanian respondents provide an ideological, if temporally removed, continuity with their nineteenth-century political forefathers, but their seeming unawareness of such a provision – given the fact that they do not invoke their ancestors – introduces the dynamism inherent in any imaginary cultural community. Indeed, this temporal-ideological continuity of which I speak extends Benedict Anderson's temporally grounded arguments that fellow nationals do not have to meet face-to-face in their dedicated investment in an imaginary community based substantively on promulgated, putative, and pervasive ideas of their cultural cohesion;⁶⁵ instead, present-day Caymanian traditionalists and their ancestors, by virtue of their temporal separation together with their virtual ideological oneness, provide Caymanianness, in this instance, its traditional-cultural "imaginary" underpinnings.

⁶⁵ See Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1991), introduction.

With such underpinnings firmly in mind, another anonymous informant captures the enduring retort of a singularly traditional Caymanian cultural understanding in relation to the Pirates Week festivities when she says '[...]the pirates aspect [of Pirates Week do not represent a true aspect of Caymanian culture,] but the District Heritage Days *do!*'⁶⁶ Before we pay greater detail to Pirates Week's District Heritage Days, it is worth striving to understand the traditionalist Caymanians' understanding of their government's sanctioning of the more piratical manifestations of Pirates Week. In a rather caustic tone of voice, for instance, Mr. Mclean reminded me that '[you] must remember that the [Pirates Week] celebrations...[are] not really for Caymanians – it [is] really a show – because Cayman has become a tourist destination, so everything we do is on a stage.'⁶⁷ '...[S]ome aspects of Pirates Week have become very commercialized – just created for tourists',⁶⁸ opines another respondent, effectively reinforcing Mr. McLean's foregoing sentiment. Such understandings, for traditionalists, problematize Pirates Week as an enduring national cultural emblem of the Cayman Islands, as it foregrounds the universally recognized fact that '[c]urrently pirates are hot, very hot!'⁶⁹ Nonetheless, this line of thought is directly antithetical to a more modern Caymanian cultural sentiment, which is more inclined to accept the seemingly

⁶⁶ Personal interview with anonymous interviewee one, May 8, 2007, p. 4.

⁶⁷ Gregory McLean interview, p. 4.

⁶⁸ Personal interview with anonymous interviewee two, p. 6.

⁶⁹ *Ibid*, 24

commercialized aspects of Pirates Week as a legitimate manifestation of a current cultural sensibility with its emphasis on globalising forces.

Thus it is the incoming pirate actors from the United States of America that are largely responsible for the popularity of the mock pirates invasion on the George Town waterfront during Pirates Week and not, the traditionalist Caymanian would say, a Caymanian awareness of the influence of piracy on his ancestors. For instance, North Carolinians Ben Cherry and his “first mate” DeeGee, have been attending Pirates Week celebrations since 1986, and their “act” has become an enduring commercial symbol of the national festival and not much else, many traditionalist Caymanians would be inclined to reply.⁷⁰ Dressed as Blackbeard each year, Cherry, along with his wife, has attended various pirates’ festivals outside of Cayman, and so great has been their popularity that Cherry has been featured on the Discovery Channel, the Learning Channel, the Travel Channel and the History Channel. His wife adds to the spectacle when she vigorously adds that ‘it’s important for people to know that pirates weren’t limited to a specific gender or class...and my part...gives the females in the audience something that they can relate to.’ Together with the Seattle Seafair Pirates—who have been attending Cayman’s Pirates Week since 1983—these visiting pirates engage in a spectacular mock pirates invasion complete with descending ships, booming cannons, and firing

⁷⁰ Assertion based on a preponderant result gleaned from twenty questionnaires entitled ‘What Makes a Caymanian?’

muskets among the 'ayes, matey! and 'walk the plank ye yellow-bellied lizard!'"⁷¹

Incidentally, the mock invasion constitutes only one hour of the twenty hours of activities that make up Pirates Week.⁷²

Nonetheless, and perhaps even more importantly, these pirates are also to be found at other school-based activities throughout the week in addition to the District Heritage Days. The presence of these figures, then, cannot help but draw attention to the irresistible forces of American popular cultural especially upon Pirates Week and Caymanian culture on the whole. Indeed, many nationalities have sought and are seeking to emulate the ostensible cultural superiority of the American people, much to the sacrifice of their own cultural and nationalist sensibilities; a condition largely attributable to the seeming economic and power disparities between an influential American presence and the rest of the world.⁷³ It becomes very important, then, to analyze at another time the extent to which Caymanianness can be said, in sociological terms, to be exhibiting a low national self-esteem for the embrace of an American cultural ideology considered by far more superior. For the time being, however, the American presence at Pirates Week is bound to draw attention to the inherent ideological differences between a traditional Caymanian cultural

⁷¹ 30th *Annual*, pp. 27-30.

⁷² *Ibid.*, p.27.

⁷³ See Lea Brilmayer, *American Hegemony: Political Morality in a One-Superpower World* (Binghampton, New York: Vail-Ballou Press, 1994).

understanding and the understandings of the cultural Caymanian more modern and global in their outlook.

According to traditionalists, then, Pirates Week's District Heritage Days aim to show visitor and foreigner alike what each of Cayman's district were like historically as well what they were and are traditionally known for. For instance, Caymanian and CEO of the Tourism Attraction Board in 2008, Gilbert Connolly, confirms the importance of the District Heritage Days in "true" historical cultural terms; '[the District Heritage Days bring] out numerous displays of local crafts and historical artifacts that add to the appeal of this long-standing festival.'⁷⁴ Similarly, another anonymous Caymanian is steadfast in her belief that the District Heritage Days are important because 'they uphold such traditional ways as catboating, fishing, silver palm tapestry and the like.'⁷⁵ Traditional Caymanian food like whelk stew, conch, turtle and heavy-cakes are also featured at the heritage days' food stalls, and proves a popular feature of the festivities.

There are seven heritage days throughout Pirates Week, six of them taking place in Grand Cayman's six districts of North Side, Bodden Town, George Town, East End, West Bay and Savannah/Newlands. Although Cayman Brac has its own districts (six

⁷⁴ Gilbert Connolly, 'Letter: Efforts to preserve Cayman's culture and heritage misinterpreted' in *Cayman Net News*, at http://www.caymannetnews.com/editorial.php?news_id=9170&start=0&category_id=8, August 8, 2008; May 2, 2010.

⁷⁵ *The Caymanian Compass*, February 20, 2008, p.3.

in total), only one day has been designated Cayman Brac heritage day, of which the under-populated Little Cayman is a part. The North Side district heritage day, for instance, celebrates its natural beauty and the fact that 'traditionally, [North Siders] have made most of [their] living off the sea and land; the theme of the Bodden Town heritage district days falls within this district's historical importance as Grand Cayman's first capital, while West Bay is known for its 'Christian, seafaring, turtling, agricultural and thatch heritage.' Given the obvious historical-occupational contiguity of such a tiny geographic area, the other districts do not differ much traditionally, from Savannah/Newlands with its traditional emphasis on agriculture, to George Town, which was once a relatively vibrant fishing village.⁷⁶ At the District Heritage Days, then, one could expect to find various stalls showcasing Cayman ways of old, from the way food used to be cooked, to articles made by the unique Cayman silver palm thatch, to traditional-based reenactments of daily ways of life including the quadrille dance, community concerts of old, and costumed reenactments of going to sea or the market.

One traditionalist Caymanian begins to confirm the modern/traditional cultural dichotomy inherent in the Pirates Week celebrations especially through the gaze of the District Heritage Days:

⁷⁶ See footnote 71.

Pirates Week has elicited much controversy over the years. Those against the revelry and parades say they prefer not to be associated with a legacy of piracy. The argument has been put forth that for those against the debauchery there is now a major emphasis on the district heritage days. This is a good thing because it appears that, as Caymanians, we do not put enough emphasis on our heritage.⁷⁷

Manifestations of revelry and lewdness are automatically tied to a legacy of piracy, as if this anonymous Caymanian is in the process of mapping the historical specificity of piracy. Notice also that such manifestations are not considered here as symptoms of a wider Caribbean history with regard to the slaves' reappropriation of European carnival, to be discussed in the following subsection. For this traditional-minded Caymanian, the link between historical maritime piracy and the celebration of pirates in the present is one of debauchery: the pirate of old was debauched and so any cultural celebration of him is also likely to be debauched. Utilising a linear deterministic approach, such traditionalists provide a crude link between past and present when explaining Pirates Week; indeed, the words of the foregoing respondent effortlessly echo the sentiments of, say, Miss Dolly, who is quick to distance the "true" inner Caymanian way from outer corrupting influences on that way; or Albert, who is keen to question why certain Caymanians celebrate piracy when it never stood for true Caymanianness.

⁷⁷ Anonymous, 'Opinion: The Heritage Day that never was', in *Cayman Net News*, at http://www.caymannetnews.com/commentary.php?news_id=3831&start=0&category_id=10, November 30, 2007; May 2, 2010.

In such cultural traditionalist cultural discourses, the District Heritage Days become a trope of rescue, where a trope represents a subjective-symbolic appropriation of any article of reality.⁷⁸ This speaks to a communication nestled in the Caymanian consciousness as it moves between the *who* and *what*: *who* is a Caymanian and *what* role do the District Heritage Days play in that sense of Caymanianness? Indeed, this link is necessarily subjective for the simple fact of the constant change that cultures undergo; thus by emphasizing a perfect historicity between piratical past and present, in their zeal for the retention of cultural purity, the traditionalist Caymanian has overlooked the fact that cultures experience transformations and evolutions between history and modernity, between past and present. The modern-thinking Caymanian seems to have a firmer grasp of this idea, which is perhaps why they are keener to break with the cultural past which carries an antiquated logic. Yet the traditionalist assumes a rather contradictory cultural position in relation to their cultural understandings and elevation of the District Heritage Days; by stressing the purity of the past through the actuality of the District Heritage Days, traditionalists do not take into account just how much Caymanianness has changed. Indeed, it is quite natural to strive to preserve one's heritage for future generations, but the sentiments of certain traditionalist Caymanians have often consolidated towards the almost God-given imperative to do away with the vulgar and lewd modern aspects of their culture, which the more modern-thinking Caymanian would see as natural

⁷⁸ Julian Wolfreys, *Literature, in Theory: Tropes, Subjectivities, Responses & Responsibilities* (London: Continuum London, 2010), chapter 11.

manifestations of an evolving culture. Thus where modernists are more likely to accept the importance of outside cultures and peoples on a modern Caymanian way, traditionalists hold on to the contradictory idea that culture is not supposed to evolve but remain static; therein lies the latter's misguided sense of cultural positivity.

In elevating the District Heritage Days, traditionalist Caymanians find themselves working within an idealistic mode. Where Constance Bodden demonstrated her adherence to the ideal that, economically speaking, life was comfortable and not that hard in phase six of Caymanian history (see Section 3.2.3), her contemporaries are holding fast to the ideal that life in Cayman would be better if there was a return to an earlier time. There is a decidedly ancient mythical dimension to my foregoing interpretation. Popularized by Greek philosopher Plato in the ancient era, myths came to represent traditional stories created from fiction and sustained by time; stories meant to instill ideological values in the Greek citizenry.⁷⁹ In a somewhat similar way, traditionalist Caymanians have created traditional stories by virtue of a lived past, stories that act as ideological markers in the culturally diluted present; however, such factual ideas and stories assume *their* mythical qualities in their refusal to view the factual present outside of the antiquated traditionalist mindset. Thus for traditionalists, the cultural sensibility of a Caymanianness more modern in

⁷⁹ See, for instance, Andrew Von Hendy, *The Modern Construction of Myth* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002), chapter 1.

its orientation is understood in corrupt terms because of the vast ideological differences between past and present, and the past becomes a positive ideological index of the “negative” present.

With all of the above in mind, major positive traditionalist notions, then, are to be found not in piracy, but legal seafaring. In this sense, the turtle and the turtle-fisher have also been romanticized, if more towards the defense of historically based, sacred cultural mores bound up in an honest and unassumingly lifestyle. Indeed, this brand of the romantic is not as limited as one would be inclined to think, but passionately encompasses everything that was legal in Cayman’s seafaring history. It was demonstrated in Section 3.2.3 that the legal seafaring lifestyle of the Caymanian ancestor is understood as a vital, indispensable aspect of the Caymanian cultural identity; therefore, it is at this point worth asking how possible is it for traditionalist Caymanians to promote their own romantic-historical ideas of the sacred and once economically vital turtle within the pervasive carnivalesque essence of Batabano.

Postscript

The above assessments demonstrate that Caymanian cultural sentiment with regard to Pirates Week is by no means monolithic, but is rather conflicted between traditional and modern notions. Keeping in mind, then, the invariable presence of

foreignness in any such conflict, we should anticipate the potential ways in which traditionally inclined Caymanian cultural understandings are bound to clash with a more modern counterpart far more liberal and welcoming in its cultural outlook and substantively driven by the inevitable forces of globalisation. We continue to explore this modern/traditional dynamic by turning our attention to Batabano.

4.3.2 Bringing the Legitimacy of Carnival and the Carnavalesque to Bear on Caymanian Culture

Batabano is another important national cultural event in the Cayman Islands. The term “batabano” originally refers to the tracks a female turtle makes as she crawls up the beach to lay her eggs, a ritual that would have been a familiar sight along the shores of the turtle-invested economy of the Cayman Islands in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries especially. Held annually in the first week of every May since 1983, Batabano was initially organized and solely promoted by the Rotary Club of the Cayman Islands, not so much, according to them, as a tourist attraction, but as ‘...a salute to Cayman’s turtling heritage.’⁸⁰ According to its promoters, Batabano was created as a cultural vehicle with which to celebrate ‘youth and creativity.’ As with the inaugural Pirates Week festival, the very first Batabano was also lost in obscurity, perhaps due to the visit of the great boxer Mohammed Ali on the same day. Regardless, any sense of fun and revelry associated with both festivals

⁸⁰ For an understanding of batabano as historical concept first, see Cayman Carnival, *Cayman Carnival Batabano History*, <http://www.caymancarnival.com/?q=node/202>, 2009; May 7, 2009. See also, Craton, *Founded*, chapter 7; Roger Smith, *The Maritime Heritage of the Cayman Islands* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2000), chapter 3.

represented nothing new in terms of popular Caribbean culture: Anglophone Caribbean nations like Trinidad and the Bahamas have been celebrating carnival since the early to mid-nineteenth century. Nonetheless, as it is my purpose to attach the carnivalesque concept to Batabano, and by extension Pirates Week, it is worth providing a brief background to the major developments of carnival in the Caribbean. Indeed, in the cases of Trinidad and the Bahamas⁸¹ especially, modern manifestations of carnival have their basis firmly rooted in history. What follows thus is the provision of the historical creation and evolution of carnival in Trinidad which, in the initial analysis, aids in the confirmation or the illegitimacy of the historical-cultural worth of Batabano.

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When Britain took control of Trinidad in 1797, a distinct, influential French creole culture was in existence there. For instance, until the end of the nineteenth century, a prevalent language in the settlement was a patois based upon 'a mixture of African languages and French.'⁸² Another important French influence was carnival, and efforts by the British authorities to suppress the celebrations associated with this

⁸¹ At present, the Bahamian people are well known for their traditional carnival festival known as Junkanoo. According to Michael Craton *et al.*, Junkanoo '...unequivocally came out of slavery and African traditions and was, despite involvement by whites, essentially a black "festival of the oppressed," ...'; See *Islanders in the Stream: A History of the Bahamian people: Volume Two: From the Ending of Slavery To the Twenty-First Century* (Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 2000 paperback edition), p.126 and chapter 4; for a thorough examination of Junkanoo in subjective terms, see, Anthony Carroll, *The History of Junkanoo Part One: My Way all the Way* (Bloomington: Indiana: AuthorHouse 2007); *The History of Junkanoo Part Two: Participants and Performers, 1940-2005* (Bloomington: AuthorHouse, 2007).

⁸² Shannon Dudley, *Carnival Music in Trinidad: Experiencing Music, Expressing Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), p.10.

influence during the nineteenth century were largely felt; indeed, such efforts were made all the more compelling given the British planters' mimicry of any such influence by 1800; John Cowley has referred to this as 'a pattern of contradictory pressures in a British Colony.'⁸³

By 1800, then, French Creole culture had pervaded Trinidadian society. Any such cultural awareness not only seemed the contribution of incoming black and white French creoles alike⁸⁴, but, more importantly, are the ways in which any historical black reappropriation of substantively white cultural manners and customs came not only to be understood by the British colonial machine in subversive terms from early on, but also provided the very basis for the creation of an official Trinidadian carnival at present.

To begin, while whites of every nationality were by 1800 celebrating 'a long period of feasts and pleasures which lasted from Christmas time until Ash Wednesday', their slaves were engaging in their own carnival at the same time.⁸⁵ Indeed, the timing of carnival was, and still is, dependent on the Christian calendar. A Latin

⁸³ John Cowley, *Carnival, Canboulay and Calypso Traditions in the Making* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p.12.

⁸⁴ When the British seized control of Spanish Trinidad in 1797, that Caribbean island had a sizeable French Creole population which had earlier migrated there from the former French colony of Saint-Domingue especially. For more information here, see, for instance, David Geggus (editor), *The Impact of the Haitian Revolution in the Atlantic World* (Columbia, South Carolina: University of South Carolina Press, 2001); Dudley, *Carnival Music in Trinidad*, p.10; Gordon Rohlehr, *Calypso and Society In Pre-Independence Trinidad* (Carapichaima, Trinidad: HEM Printers LTD., 1990), p.9.

⁸⁵ Peter Van Koningsbruggen, *Trinidad Carnival: A Quest for National Identity* (London: Macmillan, 1997), pp.12-14.

word, carnival, or *carne vale*, translated means *farewell to meat* (or *the flesh*). With its indulgences of excesses of every kind, carnival was intentionally created to precede the season of Lent, which is devoted to profound introspection and disabusing one's self of fleshly or worldly desires. Lent occurs between Ash Wednesday and Easter Sunday, and represents, among other things, the time to be retrospectively holy and abstinent, an abstinence made all the more meaningful, at present, for the previous days of "carnavalesque debauchery," which by 1800 usually occurred at Christmas time. Still, slaves in the Caribbean were long being allowed to hold their own private carnivalesque celebrations (as it were) usually on Saturdays or Sundays, but colonial officials were constantly wary of these cultural demonstrations. The lascivious, pelvic gyrations of black women who would later become known in Trinidad as *Jamettes*, together with intense call and response songs which, underpinned by frenetic drumming, suggested imminent rebellion, was accepted with a 'mixture of tolerance and suspicion.' Nonetheless, that Martial Law was usually proclaimed at Christmas time, also confirms the colonial imperative to 'control abandon [even] among white inhabitants' whose carnivalesque spirit often led to fights between 'aggrieved parties and consequent death.'⁸⁶

The combustibility associated with carnival in Trinidad continued even upon emancipation in 1834 and the dissolution of apprenticeship four years later in 1838.

⁸⁶ Rohlehr, *Calypso and Society*, p.14.

Former slaves and their progeny expressed their perennial and deep-rooted anger towards whites in the 'infamous Canbouley Riot' of 1881. Canbouley in French means 'burned cane', and had come to represent for Trinidadian blacks 'a re-enactment of the forced marches that slaves endured when a cane field burned and had to be harvested instantly with the help of slaves from neighbouring plantations.' By 1881, Regiments – an earlier non-white form of masquerade which represented the mimicry of white hierarchical structures – had given way to *Kalenda* – or stick-fighting – bands which were led by *Chantwells*, or head singers, who, supported by drums, challenged other *Kalenda* bands; the idea of dueling had indeed come from a French Creole tradition which was being forcefully played out in earlier carnivals. Nonetheless, when the new police captain of Trinidad demonstrated his determination to put a stop to the volatility of the *Kalenda* procession, a number of the *Kalenda* bands joined forces and 'waged a pitched battle with police.'⁸⁷

Outraged by the excessive use of police force, elite French Creoles, brown and white alike, stood together with the enraged lower black classes, and to dramatic cultural result: the British governor of Trinidad confined the police to their barracks the day following the riot, but by then the alliance between French Creole elite and the lower black classes had been premised on a perennial distrust of the British festering since slavery days, and to the point that a once-segregated carnival was on the verge of

⁸⁷ Dudley, *Carnival Music*, p.12.

being celebrated by black, brown, white and Indian⁸⁸ in the same physical space. To quell the new socially disruptive qualities of an evolving carnival, the government sanctioned the creation of formal competitions around 1900, with various kinds of prizes – cash and otherwise – being given to the most popular bands.⁸⁹ Yet it should briefly be mentioned here that the racial alliances that secured a relaxation of class rigidity in this instance, pointed to a deeper cultural truth: the “brown” – or, largely mulatto – middle class had by 1900 found itself in positions of potential political leadership and were aware of the needed support of the black masses in their push for greater internal autonomy.

The national countenance of Trinidadian carnival, then, represented, by 1900, the promotion of a largely black, somewhat anti-colonial interpretation of carnival. Nonetheless, by the 1990s and 2000s, colour and class considerations on carnival seemed to have been eclipsed by the sheer spectacle of the event and the ways in which it promoted and continues to promote oneness among all sectors and tiers of society, from the very rich to the very poor.⁹⁰

⁸⁸ By 1845, seven years after apprenticeship was abolished in the British West Indies, large numbers of Indians were being contracted to Trinidad as indentured labourers; many of them opted to remain in Trinidad after their contracts were up and therefore developed a sense of belonging and attachment to Trinidad. See, for instance, Bridget Brereton, *Race Relations in Colonial Trinidad, 1870-1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979); Ron Ramdin, *Arising From Bondage: History of the Indo-Caribbean People* (London: I.B. Tauris & Co Ltd., 2000); David Dabydeen *et al.* (eds.), *India in the Caribbean* (Hertford: Hansib, 1987).

⁸⁹ Dudley, *Carnival Music*, p.13.

⁹⁰ Koningsbruggen, *Trinidad Carnival*, pp. 256-260.

Therefore, to contextualize the present manifestations of an otherwise historically specific carnival, the non-white populations of Caribbean islands – from Trinidad to the Bahamas, from Barbados to Jamaica – continue to “play mas” (play masquerade) as a necessary cultural manifestation of their cultural histories, which were substantively influenced by a self-indulgent white creolised European crust of Caribbean society. In my opinion, then, the present-day actualities and ideas of carnival are essentially associated with the cultural decentralization, reappropriation, and nationalization of an earlier white-led celebration by the non-white masses. In this sense, as, say, Trinidadian, or Bahamian, or Grenadian masses play mas, they are benignly countenancing their ancestors’ more militant cultural stance, which was concerned with re-inscribing the very ideological importance and numerical dominance of *their* cultural selves on their disfranchised existence. In this instant, the Bakhtinian conception of the carnivalesque as a subverter of an assumptive dominant cultural order amasses great importance if only in historical hindsight.⁹¹ With a historical understanding of carnival and the carnivalesque firmly

⁹¹ In his analysis of selected works of sixteenth century French writer Francois Rabelais, twentieth century Russian philosopher Mikhail Bakhtin provides compelling insights into the world of carnival in medieval Europe, and the ways in which carnival’s ambivalent nature worked towards undermining the moral and ethical *zeitgeist* of that age. With its emphasis on momentarily losing one’s self to passions and desires normally considered to be immoral and even amoral, modern carnival continues to betray this ambivalence. Yet in decidedly more historical – colonial – terms, Bakhtin’s critique of Rabelais’s Renaissance-inspired works is just as applicable in the sense that as blacks throughout the Caribbean practiced their ostensibly anti-colonial version of carnival, they were, via a cultural stance, undermining the legal structures which controlled them. See *Rabelais and His World*, translated by Helen Iswolsky (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1984), chapter 3.

in mind, I now assess the extent to which Batabano falls within this history either through a traditionalist gaze or a gaze more modern in its orientation.

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Unlike Pirates Week, tourism statistics are not available for Batabano. Nonetheless, the carnival quickly garnered the support of the government and was sponsored by many local businesses, and as a result grew from a one-day event 'to four days of various events, including the traditional parade, a street dance, a masquerade fete, a soca music contest and more.'⁹² Like Trinidad's carnival, "playing mas" seems indispensable to the spirit of Batabano as revelers parade elaborate costumes on equally elaborate floats – or mobile platforms – throughout the streets of West Bay and George Town; as these revelers "drop and whine" to an array of West Indian music, one thing would have been made abundantly clear to them: '[Batabano]... is a true Caribbean tradition – a cultural kaleidoscope of music and dance pageantry with roots mirroring the region's diverse history of African and religious influences. The colourful costumes reflect our vibrant landscapes and traditions, and the music is the very rhythm of life in the islands...[Batabano]...is the Caribbean's cultural expression of the arts.'⁹³

⁹² *Cayman Net News*, 'Editorial: Reinventing Batabano', at <http://www.caymannetnews.com/2004/04/640/editorial.shtml>, April 22, 2004; May 6, 2009.

⁹³ Cayman Carnival, 'History'.

Additionally, the junior carnival parade, created in 2002, marks the effort to bring the nation's youth into direct contact with what is, in some circles, considered to be quintessentially Caymanian, simultaneously 'creating a safe environment for the students to play mas...for generations to come.' The 2009 Chairperson of Batabano, Donna Myrie-Stephens, attempts to confirm the national and cultural importance of the Junior Batabano Street Parade: 'We are so pleased that the community has embraced this family-style display of Cayman Carnival for the youth of our country.' She continues: 'With the growing number of private and public schools taking part in colourful costumes [sic] it really gives the young people a dedicated opportunity to shine during their parade through downtown George Town.'⁹⁴

The family-oriented, "cultural" junior parade is appropriately followed – on the same day – by a family event which occurs on the lawn of the governor's residence (located along the prosperous and tourist-filled stretch of town known as Seven Mile Beach which lies between West Bay and George Town). The organizers of the Family Fun Day boast the best in traditional Caymanian cuisine (of which Cayman's national dish of stewed turtle meat is featured), keen also to promote an amateur singing contest, a teen dance, and a children's playground. Later that night, in 'an elegant corporate evening' labeled 'the masquerade fete', Caymanian and expatriate adults alike are invited to dance for hours to the music of an invited popular West

⁹⁴ *Caymanian Compass*, 'Batabano soon come', at <http://www.caycompass.com/cgi-bin/CFPnews.cgi?ID=10381675>, April 16, 2009; April 29, 2009.

Indian recording artist at the historic Pedro Castle, widely regarded as the birthplace of a primitive form of Caymanian – even Caribbean – democracy in December, 1831.⁹⁵ The Friday night fete is held on the following night, at a location to be announced, and where guest musicians like Byron Lee and the Dragonnaires, and Machel Montano, among others have performed their popular repertoires. Like Pirates Week, Batabano is widely regarded as a ‘time to celebrate local surroundings, display creativity, voice social issues and, of course, to party and unite.’ In light of the foregoing descriptions of Batabano, does this festival *really* owe the authenticity of its empowerment to an earlier ‘Caymanian way’ dependent on the turtle and the turtle-fisher?⁹⁶

The likes of Brent McLean and Nyda Flatley would answer the foregoing question with a resounding *no*. For instance, in 2008, Mr. McLean, who was then president of the Cayman Music and Entertainment Association, expressed that the Batabano Committee should give more local musicians a chance to showcase their talents: ‘Is

⁹⁵ Dissatisfied with Jamaica’s administrative neglect, between late 1831 and early 1832, a unique and atypical brand of adult suffrage, at least for the West Indies at this time, was introduced to internal Caymanian politics. Though we are never precisely made aware of the nature of the extent of this adult suffrage, we can be fairly certain that free blacks, coloureds and white alike were able to vote for a representative on the basis of the district in which they were settled once they had satisfied certain ownership requirements. For a thorough understanding of Pedro St. James Castle’s history, of both the objective and romantic variety, respectively, see: Craton, *Founded*, 98; PRO, CO 137/179, 189 192, 198, 367; and Patricia DaCosta, *The History of Pedro St. James ‘Castle’...Cayman’s First National Historic Sight: Intrigue, romance, history, drama* (George Town: Patricia Dacosta, 2003).

⁹⁶ See Anonymous, ‘Batabano 2001 promises bigger carnival and...MORE REVELRY’, in *Cayman Net News*, at <http://www.caymannetnews.com/Archive/Archive%20Articles/March%202001/Issue%2068/batbano.html>, March 20, 2001; October 5, 2008.

Batabano not about promoting Cayman culture?' He asks, '[or] is [it] about transplanting Carnival from one country to ours?'⁹⁷ One suspects that he was emphasizing the reality that the final question summoned while stressing the need for the transformation of Batabano in accordance with his initial question. One year later, former Chief Education Officer Nyda Flatley invoked Brent's probing questions, imploring the Batabano Committee to 'take note' of them: 'Carnival is essentially not Caymanian', she begins, 'and has clearly not been embraced by all its people [sic]. Those who enjoy the making of costumes and teaching this craft to our children may be encouraged to pursue this for a more wholesome benefit.'⁹⁸

Mrs. Flatley's and Mr. McLean's preliminary assessment of Batabano establishes a binary premised on foreignness versus Caymanianness: they have made it clear that the carnivalesque manifestations of Batabano are essentially not Caymanian, a declaration that implicates some Caribbean expatriates in Cayman, and in whose original countries carnival is more entrenched and historicized; islands like Trinidad and the Bahamas come readily to mind. And, because the essence of carnival has not been embraced 'by all' Caymanians, thereby in no way reflective of the traditional 'basis of our Caymanian culture', Mrs. Flatley's understanding of Caymanian culture

⁹⁷ Brent McLean, 'Letter: Batabano and local entertainers', in *Cayman Net News*, http://www.caymannetnews.com/archivist.php?news_id=7345&pageaction=showdetail&news_id=7345&arcyear=2008&arcmonth=5&arcday=14, May 14, 2008; April 28, 2009.

⁹⁸ Nyda Flatley, 'Letter: Batabano and Caymanian Culture', in *Cayman Net News*, at http://www.caymannetnews.com/archivist.php?news_id=8069&pageaction=showdetail&news_id=8069&arcyear=2008&arcmonth=6&arcday=18, June 18, 2008; April 28, 2009.

possesses the potential to stand in intense opposition to the cultural sensibilities of the previously mentioned nationalities with regard to carnival in general.⁹⁹

Similarly, in 2006, leader of the Opposition UDP and former Leader of Government Business,¹⁰⁰ McKeeva Bush, expressed his outrage at a video that was placed on the free video sharing website, YouTube, and which showed 'young people simulating sexual intercourse at a [Batabano] street dance.'¹⁰¹ In Mr. Bush's perhaps politically expedient mind, because festivals the likes of Batabano and Pirates Week were long being funded by the government, any unwholesome behaviour that occurred was not only being technically condoned by the government, but was presenting Caymanian culture in an inaccurate, distorted light. His clear dislike for the "lewd" manifestations of these cultural events seems to be premised on his understanding that what occurs at the events is not 'all clean.' "'Liquor is involved'", he begins, "'and besides that, people are parading around half naked, showing body parts and young men are going up behind young women and women are going up behind

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁰ McKeeva Bush is leader of the United Democratic Party (UDP) and was Leader of Government Business from 2001 to 2005 and Leader of the Opposition thereafter; For a further understanding of this political figure, see, for instance, *Cayman Net News*, 'Mac's Year in Opposition', at <http://www.caymannetnews.com/cgi-script/csArticles/articles/000022/002256.htm>, May 24, 2006; April 29, 2009; 'McKeeva Bush greets the party faithful', at <http://www.caymannetnews.com/2005/04/812/faithful.shtml>, April 8, 2005; April 29, 2009. See also <http://www.udp.ky>, 2009.

¹⁰¹ Alan Markoff, 'National festivals debated', in the *Caymanian Compass*, at <http://www.caycompass.com/cgi-bin/CFPnews.cgi?ID=1031321>, June 10, 2008; April 29, 2009.

young men.”¹⁰² Opposition Member of the Legislative Assembly and Member of Parliament for Cayman Brac, Julianna O’Connor-Connolly, proved as blunt as her leader: “I make no apologies,” she begins, “[w]hat can be so cultural about people carousing and getting drunk in the street?”¹⁰³

Although differing in degrees of intensity, the foregoing sentiments have not, in their essential underlying concern, called for the complete dissolution of Batabano and by association, Pirates Week. By implication or blunt expression, these Caymanians seem not to want to completely do away with Batabano, but make it either more wholesome or Caymanian, words which achieve synonymy in this context. I suspect that if Pirates Week, for instance, was the object of discussion here, the foregoing respondents would indeed opt to retain the District Heritage Days but discard the street parades. Their desire for a more Caymanian Batabano, in the initial analysis, calls into question the compatibility between an unassuming Caymanian history and what they consider to be lewd modern carnivalesque practices.

¹⁰² In section 4.2, I was keen to see Mr. Bush as a modern thinking Caymanian who was more likely to embrace all outside influences on a dynamic and progressive Caymanian culture; however, we should here briefly consider the possibility that some Caymanians are split between modern and traditional notions of Caymanianness. Abiding by Mr. Bush’s expressions of Batabano together with his more modern sentiments earlier touched on, we may say that his latter sentimentality is shaped by the traditionalist’s sense of purity but not necessarily his xenophobic ideology; indeed, it is my intention to address the ideological parameters of such culturally-split Caymanians in another study, but for the time being we can understand Mr. Bush’s foregoing cultural expressions as traditionalist in an ultimately moral sense.

¹⁰³ Markoff, ‘National festivals debated’.

Yet the words of Deputy Director of the Cayman Islands Investment Bureau, Pat Ulett, begin to take us in another direction: ““Although carnival is primarily an expression of culture and heritage, in today’s world it is also a big money-making industry that entrepreneurs at any level can benefit from.””¹⁰⁴ Mrs. Ulett’s capitalist conviction gives the unmistakable impression that the more carnivalesque the event, the greater the turnout and thus the greater the profits to be made. As with the objective forwarded by James Bodden in 1976 with regard to Pirates Week, Mrs. Ulett presents the view that, at present, there is an essential connection between financial success and culture: the connection here is constructed and negotiated through modern eyes, a gaze which indeed proves the brunt of the traditionalists’ ire. Thus when parade participants create costumes for Batabano which, for instance, ““depict the role that beauty pageants play in Caymanian society and the inherent natural beauty of Caymanian women””, or express dance as ‘an important cultural experience...[which] offers...a unique platform to express...creativity’, traditionalist Caymanians like Mrs. Flatley and Mrs. O’Connor-Connolly are likely to view these depictions and expressions of cultural creativity with suspicion; not because they do not exhibit a potential Caymanian cultural awareness, but because they are automatically tainted by a lewdness ultimately countenanced by the anti-traditional

¹⁰⁴ *Cayman Net News*, ‘Entrepreneurship promoted in Batabano cultural event’, at http://www.caymannetnews.com/archivelist.php?news_id=7426&pageaction=showdetail&news_id=7426&arcyear=2008&arcmonth=5&arcdays=16, May 16, 2008; April 29, 2009.

logic of capitalism.¹⁰⁵ As we have seen, those Caymanians inclined to view the carnivalesque as unwholesome and un-cultural are certainly not afraid to voice their concerns and beliefs. Such sentiments amount to traditional expressions keen to safeguard an implicitly wholesome Caymanianness. The undeniable force of traditional Caymanian ideas in relation to the carnivalesque aura of Batabano amounts to a potential xenophobic posturing manifested through the criticism of the carnivalesque as innately foreign, a criticism to which a 2004 editorial in the *Cayman Net News* gives voice: 'Another criticism of the local Carnival[s] is that while [they claim] to celebrate our traditions, [they are] really not part of the Cayman Islands' culture, but one of other Caribbean countries.'¹⁰⁶

Indeed, certain expatriates in the Cayman Islands will inevitably be charged as the purveyors of incoming carnivalesque cultural sensibilities. It is not the intention of this study to assess the expressed reaction of those implicated foreign nationals (especially Trinidadians and perhaps also Jamaicans to a lesser extent), who may be considered as the real culprits behind the import of what are seen as lewd cultural ways. Nonetheless, it is worth here quoting the very illuminating social commentary of English attorney Stephen Hall-Jones – affectionately known as “the Major” –

¹⁰⁵ *Cayman Net News*, 'Organizers confident costume parades will be best in history', <http://www.caymannetnews.com/2004/05/647/parades.shtml>, May 3, 2004; April 29, 2009.

¹⁰⁶ *Cayman Net News*, 'Editorial: Reinventing Batabano', at <http://www.caymannetnews.com/2004/04/640/editorial.shtml>, April 22, 2004; April 29, 2009.

which provides an analytical basis for negative and positive Caymanian responses to outside cultural influences:

Immigrants, whether into Britain or into Cayman, do not use their new status to try to radically change or take over the society to which they have been granted such privilege.

It happens automatically. New citizens bring with them their own cultures, ideas, religions and dress. By that process they introduce changes in the society which they have now joined.

It is inevitable and ought to be welcomed. The idea that Cayman, or any country which needs a steady flow of new immigrant citizens, can remain locked in a kind of historical time capsule is pure pie-in-the-sky. Of course new citizens will change the society they have joined, of course new citizens will “water down” the blood of the old guard and, yes, in time the new citizens will be in the voting majority.¹⁰⁷

Like modern-thinking Caymanian Dave Martins, the Major understands the pervading and inevitable effects of multiculturalism (see previous subsection, pp.310-312). Where traditionalist Caymanians are more likely to view certain incoming cultures in a negative, xenophobic light, the Major has illuminated the cultural philosophy inherent in the new citizen’s body and mind; this returns to the modern idea of the inevitability of cultural change and the values which will be

¹⁰⁷ Stephen Hall-Jones, ‘Commentary: And another thing!’, in *Cayman Net News*, <http://www.caymannetnews.com/cgi-script/csArticles/articles/000015/001561.htm>, May 1, 2006; May 7, 2009.

uncovered as a result of this change. According to Ronald Inglehart *et al.*, in healthy and dynamic multicultural societies

[c]ultural emphasis shifts from collective discipline to individual liberty, from group conformity to human diversity, and from state authority to individual autonomy giving rise to a symptom that we call self-expression values. These values bring increasing emphasis on the civil and political liberties that constitute democracy, which provides broader latitude for people to pursue freedom of expression and self-realization.¹⁰⁸

This quotation emphasizes two important points: First, the values associated with more modern understandings of festivals like Pirates Week and Batabano locate a great deal of their legitimacy in the unifying effects that dynamic multiculturalism should precipitate as this is being tempered by a liberating individualism; and, second, such values are in many ways indebted to the irresistible forces of the capitalistic guidance of globalisation. Merging these two points, then, leaves us with one overriding question which I hope to answer by the conclusion of this section: is the historical, traditional nature of batabano reconcilable with its modern, carnivalesque ideological underpinnings in any way?

Placing greater emphasis on traditionalist and potentially xenophobic Caymanian cultural ideas, the previous assessments have attempted to fore a bristling Caymanian cultural rift with regard to Batabano. Paying greater attention to modern

¹⁰⁸ Ronald Inglehart *et al.*, *Modernization, Cultural Change and Democracy: The Human Development Sequence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), pp. 3, 4.

economic, social, and cultural Caymanian thought, I now further trace the developing ideologies behind Batabano (and by association, Pirates Week) as these are bound to express and perpetuate the potential incompatibilities between carnival and carnival as a *genuine* vehicle for Caymanian cultural-historical expression.

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In the initial analysis, the printed expressions of Batabano from 1984 into the present come largely from government publications keen to stress 'camaraderie, sportsmanship and a sense of identity.' In 1993, for instance, new governor to Cayman, Michael Gore, affirmed these qualities as 'all important ingredients of nation-building' (although he thereafter admitted he had yet to witness 'the special creativity' of Batabano).¹⁰⁹ Extending a warm welcome to Caymanian and visitor alike, Mr. Gore's Minister for Tourism, Mr. Jefferson (and a patriotic Caymanian by reputation) further underpinned the dire necessity for such national qualities: '[w]orking together is one of the themes of this government to ensure that everyone has an opportunity to participate but more importantly that by joining our resources we can make a bigger impact for our people.'¹¹⁰ What sort of bigger impact did the Minister have in mind vis-à-vis camaraderie, sportsmanship, and a sense of identity? Was it a cultural impact? And, if so, would it fall into the government-sanctioned 'carnival ideal?': 'our carnival [is] the product of many different influences: the

¹⁰⁹ Michael Gore, 'Governor's Message, Batabano 1993', in the *10th Annual Batabano Carnival* (Grand Cayman: Cayman Islands Government, 1993), p. 3.

¹¹⁰ Thomas Jefferson, 'Welcome Message from Hon. Thomas C. Jefferson OBE, JP, Executive Council Member for Tourism, Environment and Planning', in the *9th Annual Batabano Carnival*, p. 7.

African tradition of depicting animals and nature; the religious tradition of pre-Lenten celebration; the well-entrenched European love of costumed balls; all of these factors in emergence.’¹¹¹ According to this definition, the carnival ideal automatically stresses a synergy between otherwise disparate elements – that is, African and European traditions and religiosities – into one coherent cultural ideology premised on camaraderie, sportsmanship, and a sense of identity. The underlying idea here is that the carnival ideal, in the initial analysis, emanates from the historical forces of creolisation, where creolisation refers to the development of a Caribbean culture complex premised on African and European cultural inputs;¹¹² in the second analysis, the carnival ideal gathers legitimacy in positive multiculturalism with *its* emphasis on peaceful coexistence, indeed togetherness. We cannot precisely say what the Tourism Minister really had in mind here, but his words indeed open up legitimate avenues along which to explore modern cultural understandings associated with Batabano.

In more intimate, local cultural terms, one article especially begins to imply perhaps the only possible source for the potential concord between this carnival ideal, camaraderie, sportsmanship, and a sense of identity in terms of Batabano: ‘A far cry from its humble origins as the name of a small fishing village in West Bay, once

¹¹¹ Anonymous, ‘The Carnival Ideal’, the *10th Annual*, p. 35.

¹¹² See Edward Brathwaite, *The Development of Creole Society in Jamaica 1770-1820* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971).

frequented by turtle-fishers and fishermen, Batabano now depicts the very spirit of Caymanian creativity and ingenuity.’¹¹³ According to the foregoing expression, the source responsible for the integration of the carnival ideal, camaraderie, sportsmanship, and a sense of identity, as these begin to establish the modern cultural coherency of Batabano, is necessarily a historical one: Batabano’s modern cultural sense of creativity has, from the outset, been determined by the historical legitimacy of that term in Cayman, not so much in historical carnivalesque terms but in historical economic ones, as the turtle figured substantively in Cayman’s economic history. Yet when stripped of its historical essences and placed firmly in the present, the source that is considered here cannot adequately explain the modern sensibility of Batabano. We may here look to the *spectacle of revelry* which seems to drive modern interpretations of Batabano. According to Guy Debord, ‘[t]he spectacle is not a collection of images; rather, it is a social relationship between people that is mediated by images.’¹¹⁴ In modern terms, then, we may say that this new mediated social relationship between people marks the transition from a former unified traditional lifestyle to one which consolidates disparate multicultural images towards a coherent sociality tempered by globalisation;¹¹⁵ in other words, the historical nature of the carnivalesque becomes displaced by the ubiquity of the creative multicultural present with its emphasis on the peaceful coexistence and

¹¹³ Anonymous, ‘Batabano’, in *10th Annual*, p. 17.

¹¹⁴ Guy Debord, *Society of the Spectacle*, translated by Donald Nicholson-Smith (New York: Zone Books, 1994), p.12

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*

participation of cultures as these empower trans-capitalism. The spectacle of revelry thus represents a new cultural logic which espouses the multicultural carnivalesque as a culturally unifying force.

Yet despite its undeniable modern logic, the spectacle of revelry here, by virtue of its potentially rich historicity, indeed makes it possible for the Cayman Islands government, already being pressured to diminish the amount of low-level Caribbean immigrant workers it allows into the islands,¹¹⁶ to ideologically secure Batabano as typically Caymanian while appearing unconcerned with any obvious external, imposed non-Caymanian cultural sensibility upon it; in this light, the spectacle of revelry can be at once local and international, at once historical and modern, and can indeed be utilised towards the fulfillment of either opposing force or their potential rapprochement. The PPM government's attitude towards the spectacle of revelry here achieves further clarity for the fact that Batabano is generally held in higher cultural esteem than Pirates Week, and has perhaps become the official festival of the Cayman Islands. In 2007, the government, in 'an unusual move', granted permission to the Batabano Committee to reproduce the Cayman flag as the 'official waver flag', further stressing that the anticipated assembly of a Caymanian cultural troupe

¹¹⁶ In section 4.2, I demonstrated the extent to which traditional-minded Caymanians express a xenophobic intent keen on the expulsion of many foreign nationals from the islands because, in their opinion, there are simply too many of them. In *Founded*, Craton has especially shown how many Caymanians view blue-collar workers, especially Jamaicans who represent the largest expatriate population in the islands. See chapter 13.

would, 'among other things, display Batabano-type costumes and spectacle.'¹¹⁷ The government's imperative to associate the carnivalesque aura of Batabano with official Caymanian culture is clear: the utilisation of the Caymanian demonym in relation to Batabano *can* evoke ideas of a local, traditional cultural awareness. Yet there is no denying that this association, by virtue of the very modern success of Batabano, exhibits multicultural overtones, such overtones emphasizing inclusivity and profit-making.

The first of these emphases, that of inclusivity, is constantly reinforced in the idea that Batabano was created to provide an opportunity for locals, from all walks of life, to display their artistic skills and talents. Spectator and reveler, Caymanian and foreign national alike are, without any noticeable cultural or national bias, compelled to lose themselves 'in the real magic of Batabano', and are further challenged to see if they can stand still as 'the captivating sounds of live steel band music and "hot" pops and soca' take magical hold of limbs.¹¹⁸ Additionally, and in terms of the primacy of profit-making, local businesses are also quite passionate in their promotion of Batabano, if not to the same extent of Pirates Week; still, in their promotion of Batabano, these businesses are keen to attract attention to their products or services by means of sponsored advertisements. Such sponsored

¹¹⁷ The Editor, 'Today's Editorial May 16: Heaps of Praise for Batabano', in *The Caymanian Compass*, at <http://www.caycompass.com/cgi-bin/CFPnews.cgi?ID=1022192>, May 15, 2007; December 12, 2008.

¹¹⁸ See Rotary Club of Grand Cayman, *6th Annual Batabano Carnival*, p.4.

advertisements can be especially found in special Batabano supplements; for instance, car dealerships Motor World and Cayman Automotive feature the Batabano logo in their advertisement even if no special deal is offered during the Batabano festivities. Similarly, other businesses like Burger King, Deloitte and Touche, and Jose Esso Gas Stations offer no special services or deals in their Batabano advertisements.¹¹⁹ Unlike Pirates Week, companies that sponsor Batabano seem satisfied to advertise their normal product, something which speaks to the carnival's locality. Yet we should begin to appreciate that the locality of Batabano does not necessarily privilege the history of that locality.

Therefore, upon any closer scrutiny of the modern intentions behind Batabano, we should indeed keep in mind that the foregoing emphases, as they undergird and legitimate any liberal Caymanian cultural sense of identity via Batabano, do not *essentially* emanate from history, although the historical circumstance that made Batabano possible in the first place is of central importance. Indeed, as I earlier alluded to, there is no documented evidence that upper-class white Caymanians *played mas* and that Caymanian slaves reappropriated their religious and cultural influences as Bahamian and Trinidadian slaves did. Nonetheless, both in light of its unassuming economic historical underpinnings and its modern carnivalesque offshoot, Batabano, like Pirates Week, exhibits a certain kind of ambivalence that is

¹¹⁹ See, for instance, *Cayman Net News, Cayman Carnival Celebrates 25 Years* (special edition), issue 1628, April 26-May 3, 2008, at <http://www.caymannetnews.com/batabano.htm>; May 4, 2010.

more essential than it is sentimental. According to the *Compact Oxford Dictionary*, the essence of a thing refers to that thing's fundamental nature, its inherent characteristics.¹²⁰ Applying this concept to Batabano aids in the revelation that the positive understandings associated with this carnival are inherently ambivalent and contradictory.

'The name Batabano comes from our rich turtling heritage and is a time for all, young and old, to express artistic talent in producing the most colourful costumes while at the same time enjoying...sweet Caribbean music [during Batabano].'¹²¹ Juxtaposing the above quotation with the historical actuality of batabano as it represented the tracks that Cayman's valuable resource left on the sandy beach as they trudged their way to a secluded spot on which to lay their eggs, provides for a murky link, as perhaps it should, between the traditional and somewhat moral perception of the indispensable turtle in Cayman and the modern carnivalesque sensibilities such a perception has subsequently generated. Although it could be argued that comradeship and solidarity are, for the cultural purposes of Batabano, being tied to an earlier Caymanian identity forged of tradition, such a juxtaposition is indeed not without an inherent ambivalence, which I pose in the form of a few questions: Can the profusely modern and 'vulgar' expressions of Batabano's – and

¹²⁰ See *The Compact Edition of the Oxford Dictionary (Second Edition)* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), p352 [p.400].

¹²¹ Anonymous, *10th Annual Batabano*, p. 17.

for that matter, Pirates Week's – carnivalesque aura really be tied to a true sense of a history-worn Caymanian culture borne of an unassuming, conservative sea trade? Or, do overwhelming incoming "other" Caribbean cultural elements in the present play more of an important role than Caymanians would like to think (or indeed admit), thereby impugning any "authentic" Caymanian cultural understanding of Batabano? Does the historical accuracy of Batabano, or its lack thereof, then, in any way affect *any* professed authenticity of a local culture? And should it? For instance, would the Caymanian cultural ingenuity behind the traditionally inclined costume entries *Native Mud*, *Out of Africa*, *Sea Fantasy* and the like, find conflict in the modern "lewd" and "vulgar" behaviour of the reveling demonstrations of these costumes *en masse*? For although such entries could be said to be inspired by history, the dancing that occurs in them has been understood by traditionalists as an arrant defiance of the island's traditional morals. Such a dynamic thus indicates a cultural ambivalence and given its dependence on tourism for about 70% of its gross domestic product, the Cayman Islands government, like the *Caymanian Compass's* treatment of Pirates Week back in the 1970s, has provided the mouthpiece for this very ambivalence, in effect creating popular understandings of the celebration and marking these as primarily, *essentially*, cultural.

To this end, I apply David Cordingly's statement that 'over the years fact has [most obviously] merged with fiction.'¹²² It is worth determining the extent to which such a merger has informed the cultural logic of modern cultural Caymanianness with regard to Pirates Week and Batabano. Yet, is the logic in question more likely to be expressed through any commercial, profiteering imperative, amassing any modest cultural importance only after the fact of these imperative? In other words, if Batabano and Pirates Week did not prove financially successful to begin with, what would be the extent of their cultural authenticity upon a well-intentioned localized modern cultural logic?

Indeed, the shaping forces of a modern cultural logic do not represent a national mortal sin – as many other prosperous nationalities are keener to live in the liberating present than the restricting past – but it does represent an element of cultural confusion for many traditionalists in the present. When, for instance, executive director of Batabano, Donna Myrie uses such words as 'entertainment', 'spectacular', and 'quite a blast' in her vivid descriptions of Batabano, one cannot help but to visualize the "marketability" concept over the cultural concept: the pushing of a product for the sake of maximum profit. This initial understanding certainly dovetails with what many traditionalists have expressed, that is, that the carnivalesque aspects of Batabano and Pirates Week are really created just for the

¹²² Cordingly, *Life Among the Pirates*, p. 2.

tourist. Cayman is not at all unique in this sensationalising of culture but is similar to the likes of Trinidad, Brazil, and New Orleans (among others), whose cultural festivals, although retaining some traditional essence, have progressively been transformed into markets for overseas revenue. Along the spectrum of marketability and culture, where does the modern cultural Caymanian logic lie?

Donna Hope begins to supply an answer to this important question in her letter to the editor entitled 'Misunderstood Batabano Promotes Unity.' In her initial analysis, she figures Cayman's cultural in the wider *culture of good times*: 'Carnival is a religious festival celebrated worldwide. It is a time when everyone can get together, set aside all differences regardless of religious belief, race, colour, social or economic achievement, and [come] together as one for a period of time.' From here, Donna moves to the specificity of Caribbeanness, stating that 'we are now in an era where we are striving for more Caribbean unity as we evolve as a people and as a nation we tend to merge other islands' cultural experiences into our own daily lives.' Indeed, this speaks of a Caribbean solidarity the likes of which the failed West Indian Federation would have been proud had its impelling political leaders truly craved regional integration and not national independence.¹²³

¹²³ Donna Myrie, 'Misunderstood Batabano promotes unity', in the *Caymanian Compass*, at <http://www.caymannetnews.com/Archive/Archive%20Articles/May%202003/Issue%20405%20Mon/405-stories.html#leditor>, May 19, 2003; December 5, 2008.

Nonetheless, by positioning herself as a bona-fide Caymanian cultural being, Donna professes 'that the resistance to the carnival from the [traditionalists]...who fail to realize the bigger picture must understand the historical, social, spiritual, psychological and economic aspects of such an event.' Regarding the vulgar 'grinding' and 'whining' gyrations of Batabano, Donna warns her readers to 'render your hearts and not your garments', hinting at the understanding that despite the 'selfish babblings' of the resistant traditionalist Caymanian, the modern Caymanian spirit of carnival is culturally pure regardless of any scanty, "immoral" costumes, although she is quick to point out, that such costumes and dancing 'can be offensive to some by standards'.¹²⁴ It would seem that Donna's most recent words are implicating the likes of, say, Miss Dolly or Gregory McLean (see previous subsection), thereby foregrounding a previous idea I had presented: modern cultural Caymanians tend not to hold hard and fast to traditional values, but veer more towards postmodern understandings of cultural equality regardless of any perceived traditionalist immoral manifestations inherent in such understandings. Indeed, such understandings stress that there are no absolute practicalities when it comes to cultural adherence other than the passionate, patriotic love for one's country.¹²⁵

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*

¹²⁵ Cf. Stanley Grenz, *A Primer on Postmodernism* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1996), chapter 3.

Donna's view perhaps finds sympathy in Sara Collin's modern Caymanian cultural outlook. Although Sara does not by any means demonstrate a truly pro-carnavalesque cultural stance, at least beyond the pale of the importance of the carnivalesque in modern Caribbean cultural life, like Donna, she positions herself as the ultimate Caribbeanist first, subsequently striving to reclaim her Caymanian culture from derogating outsiders and 'stuff[y] [traditionalist] Caymanians' especially. It seems no coincidence that Sara is chief Chair of the Human Rights Committee of the Cayman Islands; indeed, the concerns associated with human rights seem highly compatible with the intense defense that any restricting cultural opinion not be allowed to ideologically dominate the social, cultural, and national landscape it inhabits. Responding to a foreign national from the developed world who, in 1997, wrote "harshly" of the vulgar and lewd behavior of a group of Batabano revelers calling themselves the 'Muddy Foots', Sara opines: '[i]n a very crucial way, the sentiments expressed by [this foreign national] could have been those of any of the "well meaning" colonizers, explorers and missionaries of history whose revulsion at the behavior of the "savages" and "natives" and their "obscene" "tribal" rituals is well documented.' With articulate cultural conviction, Mrs. Collins has connected the harshness of the non-white Caribbean past with a subsequent coping spirit, bound no less to culturally express itself 'in our food, music, art, literature, dance, language, sport [and] in everything we do';¹²⁶ in this sense, Cayman's historical

¹²⁶ Sara Collins, 'Batabano – Carnival or Parade?', in the *Caymanian Compass*, June 18, 1997, p. 6.

evolution is no different than elsewhere in the Caribbean given that slavery was indeed institutionalized in the former. To be certain, Sara accurately highlights the gaping schism between the Caymanian who has no problem celebrating the more sensationalized aspects of Pirates Week and Batabano and who considers such celebrations as fundamentally Caymanian-cum-Caribbeanist, and their intransigent counterparts who, with a sense of righteous cultural anger, refuse to recognize the ways in which history *can* manifest itself in these celebrations. Those who were for instance offended by the Muddy Foots' behaviour would, according to those Caymanians of Sara's cultural ilk, represent that segment of Cayman society that prides itself on being Christian and moral, and indeed it is not difficult to relate the cultural consciousness of this segment with the consciousness of an earlier, colonial incoming religious hegemonic force. There seems, then, a peculiar ideological similarity between the traditional Caymanian in the present and the likes of Reverend William Knibb and H.M. Waddell, missionaries who came to the colonial West Indies just before the abolition of slavery, and who, although accepting that blacks were spiritually redeemable, were also of the view that by virtue of their Africanity, they stubbornly remained innately barbarous, uncivilized, and "dark."¹²⁷

¹²⁷ See, for instance, Catherine Hall, 'William Knibb and the Constitution of the new Black Subject', in *Empire and Others: British Encounters with Indigenous Peoples*, edited by Mark Danton *et al.* (Philadelphia: UCL Press, 1999), pp.303-324; H.M. Waddell, *Twenty-nine Years in the West Indies and Central Africa: A Review of Missionary Work and Adventure 1829-1858* (London: Routledge, 1977, 2nd revised edition).

In conclusion, the more liberal-minded, modern cultural Caymanian becomes the antithesis of “true” Caymanian culture and tradition despite a very profound cultural message: ‘[Pirates Week and Batabano] bring together the children and adults to celebrate creativity, imagination and musical talent found in the [Cayman] islands.’¹²⁸ To be clear, both established segments of the society are, from all outward appearances, celebrating culture in fundamentally different ways; thus it is hoped that this section, in its entirety, has demonstrated that modern notions of popular culture – some with historical ideological underpinnings – are in direct opposition with a traditional Caymanian cultural opinion, and at present these cultural segments seem irreconcilable.

4.4 Section Conclusion

Although traditionalist understandings of Caymanianness are generally held to a higher standard of morality, conflicting modern sensibilities have also immeasurably influenced this very Caymanianness and indeed a promoted Caymanian culture in general. Let us here consider the phenomenon of tourism. It has been said that tourists travel primarily to relax or explore a foreign clime; the tourists’ ultimate intention is to experience something new, a change from their cultural and social routines and norms.¹²⁹ North American and European tourists, which help form 80%

¹²⁸ See footnote 126.

¹²⁹ Sharon Gmelch, ‘Why Tourism Matters’, in *Tourists and Tourism: A Reader*, edited by Sharon Gmelch (Long Grove, Illinois: Waveland Press, Inc., 2010, 2nd edition), p.5.

of international tourism, may be said to come to Cayman – indeed, the Caribbean – because it represents what is exotic to them; these tourists often nurse a ‘craving of adventure by visiting distant and “exotic” peoples and locales.’¹³⁰ I speak of exoticism in a somewhat similar way that Edward Said and his disciples spoke of it, that is, as the largely Caucasian Euro-American perception of “other” ethnicities and nationalities; such perceptions can represent the tourists’ perhaps subconscious desire to express their inner baser, “underdeveloped” selves as reflected in their exciting, laid-back other.¹³¹ Given its potential, if somewhat benign, racist offshoot, an exoticism of this tenor nonetheless automatically implicates the Caymanian investment in a modern agenda that is keen to attract such tourists. In the first instance, it is no coincidence that the professions of modern cultural Caymanians sound similar to an American popular cultural credo with its emphasis on individualism, interpretation, cultural difference, and liberation; these emphases amount to what Frederic Jameson has defined as the cultural logic of late capitalism *anywhere* in the free world, including Cayman.¹³² For better or worse, the Cayman Islands and their established inhabitants lay firmly in the grip of globalisation, a fact that automatically impugns any limited traditionalist understanding about Caymanianness. However, despite the right that such a logic reserves in light of our

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, p.6

¹³¹ *Ibid.*; See also Edward Said, ‘Orientalism Reconsidered’, in *Postcolonialism: Critical Concepts in Literary and Cultural Studies*, edited by Diana Brydon (London: Routledge, 2000), pp.846-861.

¹³² Jameson, *Postmodernism*, chapter 1.

current age, it should be appreciated that given the sustaining economic effect of their conflict, both traditionalist and modern Caymanian sentiment need each other to survive if outside exotic considerations of them are to beneficially remain: without an active modern sensibility keen on promoting the islands, the “exotic” Caymanian culture, inclusive of its past, cannot be made marketable in precisely exotic terms. The sentiments of the likes of Sarah Collins or James Bodden III may betray modern expectations and understandings, but these sentiments provide Caymanian culture, indeed Caymanianness, its very marketability. Modern and traditional Caymanian sentiments may be ultimately irreconcilable in light of the findings of this study, but modern sensibilities, inclusive of governmental and private cultural promotions (see previous subsection), possess the ability to draw attention to that which drives exoticism...transitory European and American considerations of, and cravings for, a way of life different from their own, a difference that, in the context of this study, Caymanian traditionalists have striven tirelessly to explicate.

The survival of an externally derived exoticism, in spite of the current impossibility of a truly unitary cultural ideology in the Cayman context, also foregrounds another truth touched on throughout Section 4: Caymanian culture is constituted, not of a single-party cultural ethos, but a two-party one. It should therefore be recognized that although traditionalists strive to define Caymanianness according to a “pure” historical hindsight, their definitions are unavoidably situated in the current modern

age. From the analyses offered throughout this section, one gets the feeling that if traditionalists could render “profane, vulgar, and immoral” modern accretions on their culture proscriptive, they would. But then Caymanian culture would collapse on itself with no conflict to continue its financially successful shaping. To go a step further, certain traditionalist interpretations of Caymanianness may be said to engender notions associated with the loss of the “Caymanian way” because of their inherent zeal of wanting to safeguard a prosperous, moral way of life against incoming cultural sensibilities. However, that the Caymanians behind such interpretations do not make reasonable allowances for the very importance of a modern ethos on the way of life they are trying to protect, points to the enduring idea of selective cultural inferences working within a moral framework emanating substantively from idealized interpretations of history and those interpreters’ crucial role in promulgating this brand of historical-traditional knowledge.

SECTION 5 CONCLUSION

5.1 Situating Caymanians in Their Current Economic Situation

According to the Cayman Islands Tourist Board, by November 2009, 1,520,372 tourists visited the Cayman Islands that year, the lowest number since 2001 which, in the same frame of time, witnessed only 1,214,757. And although air arrivals had improved in 2008, some 302,879 stay-over tourists flying to the islands that year, by the close of 2009 only 271,958 stay-over tourists had been recorded.¹ Between 2008 and 2009, then, stay-over tourists had decreased by 13.3%, while daily cruise passenger numbers had fallen by 6.1%.²

Similarly, by June 2009 the ESO had revealed equally disturbing news at just how pervasive the global recession was. For instance, new companies' registration had fallen by 42.6%, a worrying decrease in light of the fact that Cayman's economy was also heavily dependent on the revenue generated by incoming overseas companies. The underpinning message here echoes the words of Mr. Sunderji, group chairman of Fidelity Bank, at a meeting that brought Cayman's business and financial community together: '[This decrease] was spread across all types of [new company]

¹ Wendy Ledger, 'Year end stats reveal lowest cruise visitors since 2001', in *Cayman News Service*, at <http://www.caymannewsservice.com/business/2010/01/25/year-end-stats-reveal-lowest-cruise-visitors-2001>, January 25, 2010; May 5, 2010.

² Ledger, 'Stats reveal economic woes', at <http://www.caymannewsservice.com/headline-news/2009/11/15/stats-reveal-economic-woes>, November 15, 2009.

registration [and] may be associated with the unprecedented shrinking of business activity among the advanced economies.’³

There is the view that Europe’s and America’s declining economies are affecting Cayman’s economy in a drastic way, and like other economies in the region, the investors and entrepreneurs that sustain Cayman’s economy are perhaps beginning to realize that much of Cayman’s prosperity comes not from within, but without. A declining trade import rate may also be used to confirm this realization, Cayman’s trade import, for instance, having fallen by 13% between June 2008 and June 2009. Cayman’s construction sector, which had been booming in the first eight years of the twenty-first century, also witnessed a steep decline as demand fell throughout the foregoing time period; this translated into a 17% decline in this sector, amounting to a loss of KYD \$175.6 million. In addition, ‘the total value of property transfers slumped by 43.3% bank and trust company registrations fell by 3.9%...mutual funds licenses dropped by 2.1%...[and] [s]tock exchange listings contracted by 16.1% and stock market capitalization for specialist debt also fell.’⁴ Cayman’s economy had indeed contracted by June 2009 and by the end of that year had achieved a startling overall reduction of 5.8%.⁵

³ Kevin Shereves, ‘Business Outlook 2010: Prospering in a grave new world,’ in *Cayman Net News*, at http://www.caymannetnews.com/article.php?news_id=19680, December 18, 2009; May 5, 2010.

⁴ Ledger, ‘Stats reveal economic woes’.

⁵ *Ibid.*

By early 2010, a few offshore business firms, including global insurance and reinsurance giant XL Limited, had relocated from Cayman, citing risks as their ultimate decision for leaving.⁶ Not surprisingly as well, work permits for foreign nationals also witnessed a noticeable decrease of 7.6%, 'largely on account of declines in construction, financial services and tourism related services.'⁷ Besides this, the new UDP government entered office in 2009 with sobering news: the outgoing PPM government had amassed a debt of \$33 million, and the national treasury was virtually in its final dregs; the news came on the heels of a new constitution through which Britain gave Caymanians more autonomy to handle their own internal affairs, yet it seems that government mismanagement together with the economic global recession was driving the government to bankruptcy. Nonetheless, by January 2010 Premier McKeeva Bush – the first premier since the ratification of the new constitution in May 2009 – revealed that the deficit now stood at \$56 million and that if revenues continued to remain low, the Cayman Islands would go bankrupt imminently. Offering to take a 20% pay cut, and threatening to decrease the salaries of all MLAs in addition to recommending that they make a 50% contribution to their own health insurance, Premier Bush also raised customs fees and attempted to cut civil servants' pay by as much as 10%, although in the end all

⁶ Ledger, 'Insurance firm cites "risks" as it leaves Cayman', at <http://www.caymannewsservice.com/business/2010/05/01/insurance-firm-cites-%E2%80%98risks%E2%80%99-it-leaves-cayman>, January 5, 2010; May 5, 2010.

⁷ See footnote 2.

civil servants in addition to MLAs received a modest 3.2% cut in their salaries.⁸ However, when in addition to recommending the downsizing of a bloated Cayman civil service, Britain pushed for Premier Bush to introduce some form of direct taxation, he flatly refused, stating that an income and/or property tax did not belong in the Cayman Islands. Premier Bush seems to have now changed his mind, pushing since March 2010 for a Value Added Tax.⁹ Indeed, at an earlier date, the Premier might well have suspected that Britain's simmering dislike of tax havens might have led to this suggestion, but at present he is holding fast to the assertion "that this country cannot carry on much longer without some sort of generation of payment within the country."¹⁰ Cayman's economic outlook continues to look grim.

5.2 Are Traditional and Modern Caymanian Sentiments Empowered by Economic Forces and Considerations?

This study has attempted to establish the general impact of traditionalist Caymanian thought, thereafter assessing its influence on a modern Caymanian way of life. Through analyses premised on cultural orientations indebted either to traditional or

⁸ See Ledger, '[Premier] Mac reveals \$56M deficit', at <http://www.caymannewsservice.com/headline-news/2010/02/25/mac-reveals-56m-deficit>, February 25, 2010; May 5, 2010; 'Civil service rejects cuts', at <http://www.caymannewsservice.com/headline-news/2010/03/15/civil-service-rejects-cuts>, March 15, 2010; 'Government runs out of cash', at <http://www.caymannewsservice.com/headline-news/2009/08/27/government-runs-out-cash>, August 27, 2009; May 5, 2010; Nicky Watson, 'Mac cuts MLAs' pay by 20%', in *Cayman News Service*, at <http://www.caymannewsservice.com/headline-news/2010/03/01/mac-cuts-mlas-pay-20>, March 1, 2010; May 5, 2010.

⁹ Ledger, 'Premier warns of VAT for Cayman Islands', at <http://www.caymannewsservice.com/headline-news/2010/04/27/premier-warns-vat-cayman-islands>, March 27, 2010; May 5, 2010.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

modern understandings, I have demonstrated the extent to which established Caymanians differ in their moral and cultural ideas of what is best for their islands. The more vocal traditionalist longs for a return to a purer, less culturally diluted time, while her more modern thinking counterpart is more likely to accept Cayman's present sensibility as inevitable developments and indices of prosperity. The latter would be inclined to view globalisation and multiculturalism as sustaining drives behind a new Caymanian cultural concept more rooted in the progressive, evolving present, and not so much the disappearing, antiquated past. This is the nature of the rift that divides a Caymanian cultural sense.

Yet in light of the foregoing economic picture I have painted, I cannot help but ask a question that has been nagging me as I was writing this thesis and Cayman's economic outlook suddenly changed from positive to grim, from prosperous to bordering on bankruptcy: how much of a factor does economics play in Caymanians' cultural understanding of themselves? It has constantly been said that Cayman enjoys one of the highest GDP per capita outputs in the world and represents the most prosperous country in the Caribbean region. As a Caymanian myself, I am all too familiar with the arrogance that reveals itself when a Caymanian begins to break down to, say, a visiting foreign national these almost age-old facts. Yet this arrogance also reveals a certain ignorance which, admittedly, I have been complicit in: in my literature review, I was indeed quick to counter Gad Heuman's

suggestion that Cayman was too small and economically and politically vulnerable to consider independence, choosing instead to identify with Tony Thorndike's assertion that although Cayman has the economic and political wherewithal to achieve independence, there is a fear of the unknown. In light of the present economic situation, I wonder if Thorndike's assessment is *really* accurate or if an ignorance based on entitlement belies it; in other words, Caymanians seem to utilise putative understandings of their prosperity as a way to help them feel good about themselves as nationals and cultural beings; but without the guiding, often restrictive hand of Great Britain, would we not be just another Jamaica suffering from the effects of economic and political instability which comes not so much as the result of a lack of clear insight as to the way forward but the successful implementation and sustenance of any such insight? And now that we find ourselves in economic decline, with many foreign nationals and businesses opting to go elsewhere for work, just *how* important are traditional and modern Caymanian sentiments *really*?

Indeed, it seems that both modern-thinking and traditionalist Caymanians speak the way they do because they feel that they are entitled to the great wealth that has come to Cayman; they speak fondly of the land of their birth and upbringing and high standard of living. Over the years, they have come to realize that Cayman is a world-class destination and it gives them an added satisfaction that their islands, in

aggregate, have often been being referred to as the Little Miami: just as how immigrants go the United States and Britain in search of a better life, so too do they come to Cayman to partake in the seemingly endless financial opportunities that this Dependency has to offer. Yet in light of our present economic situation, will it be just a matter of time before large numbers of immigrants, who are at once sources of dislike and appreciation, dwindle to near nothingness? When there are no longer any “foreigners” or indeed “foreignness” upon which to impose our xenophobic, traditionalist, or modern understandings, will the Caymanian cultural dialectic simply implode? And if not, will the outside world really care if Cayman is unable to retain its status as a premiere offshore finance centre and tourist destination? My point crystallizes with a few more questions: Are Caymanians deluding themselves in their steadfast adherence to their cultural sentiments? If the economy becomes stagnant, would they quickly use their European passports and start life anew in foreign lands whose peoples were once the cynosure for their contempt or appreciation? Or, would they be so convicted of their Caymanianness as to go “down with the ship,” as it were? Would the traditionalist Caymanian still speak from his or her lofty perspective of cultural purity if there are no other cultures with which to make reference to? And what of the modern-thinking Caymanian, with his cultural sensibility rooted substantively in the present? Would he or she become just another agent of globalisation, moving elsewhere to continue – or try to continue, at any rate – a way of life free of any heartfelt consideration of his or her heritage?

These questions, for the moment, are highly philosophical, as Caymanians still find themselves in favourable financial positions despite the hard times that have befallen us. Yet my assessments throughout this thesis as outlined above are by no means complete, and avenues for future work include:

- Determining the fullest extent to which Caymanian cultural sentiment is dependent on the fluctuations of the economy.
- Assessments of the cultural sentiments of certain foreign nationals towards the determination as to whether they adhere more to the transient values of globalisation or their own traditional cultural values.
- Establishing the extent to which the new Paper Caymanian exhibits understandings and feelings of belonging, especially in the face of a noticeable established Caymanian xenophobia.
- Analyzing the ways in which any individual Caymanian can be seen as a cultural hybrid of sorts, that is, as split in sentiment between traditional and modern cultural understandings and positions.

In conclusion, I wish to use a brief analogy indebted to the powerful insights of Gilbert Ryle as seen through the equally powerful analytical eyes of Clifford Geertz: A man was in his house one rainy night when he heard a knock at the door. 'Who is it?' he asked as he approached the door. 'I'm cold and tired', came a decidedly timid, vulnerable female voice. 'I need help', she continued, 'I am about to die of hunger

and starvation.’ ‘How do I know that it is safe to let you in?’ the man asked. ‘Haven’t you any compassion!’ she exclaimed. The man pondered her cry a moment, frowned, and then opened the door, and as he did the woman rushed into the house with thousands following behind her.¹¹ In the final analysis, it is hoped that this thesis has satisfactorily assessed the historical, cultural, and social circumstances that both predated and surrounded just why the Caymanian “opened the door” to large numbers of foreign nationals and their cultural sensibilities, together with their subsequent splintered and antagonistically distinct Caymanian responses.

¹¹ See Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), pp.7-10.

Appendix A

What Makes a Caymanian?



The following questionnaire seeks to get a feel for the ‘indigenous’ Caymanians’ feelings about their cultural identity in an increasingly globalized and transnational world

Kindly answer all questions —it will only take about 5-10 minutes☺. All answers will be dealt with the utmost confidence. Return to Christopher Williams (PhD Candidate, University of Warwick), c/o the UCCI front desk.

Name (optional):.....

Age:.....

1. Do Caymanians have a distinct and unique culture? Yes/No/Maybe/Not sure
2. Do you think that the Pirate’s Week celebrations, for instance, represents a true aspect of Caymanian culture? Yes/No/Maybe/Not sure
3. Circle any of the following elements which you think makes one a ‘true’ Caymanian

Christianity money material possession a knowledge of Caymanian history

skin colour education (to college level) having a Caymanian accent

having relatives that are Caymanian having lived in Cayman for most of one’s life

none of the above

If there are any elements which you feel have been left out, write them in the space below:

4. Do you think racism still exists in Cayman? Yes/No

5. If you answered yes to number 4, which national and/or racial groups do you think are most likely to be racially discriminated against in the Cayman Islands? You may circle as many groups as you think apply to the question (this question continues on next page).

National Group

Racial Group

Jamaican

Black

Filipino

White

Canadian

Mixed (between black and white)

American (U.S. citizen)

Asian

Honduran

Other group

Other group.....

6. If you answered no to number 4, why do you think that colour no longer matters to many Caymanians (you may circle as many reasons that apply)?

- a. Racism is a thing of the past
- b. People are judged more by their personality, qualifications and disposition
- c. Caymanians are so racially mixed that racism just doesn't make any sense
- d. Given Cayman's economic success, there is no room for racism in the society
- e. Other
reason/s.....
.....
.....

7. Do you think that there is a link between Caymanian identity and popular American culture? Yes/No/Maybe/Not sure

8. Do you think that there is a link between Caymanian identity and popular Jamaican culture? Yes/No/Maybe/Not sure
9. Do you think that there is a link between Caymanian identity and Honduran culture? Yes/No/Maybe/Not sure
10. Do you think that Caymanian cultural identity is increasingly being affected by incoming Filipinos? Yes/No/Maybe/Not sure
11. Do you think that the Caymanian way of old has been lost due to incoming groups and cultures? Yes/No/Maybe/Not sure
12. Briefly express what you think, if anything, can be done to preserve your Caymanian way of life.

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THANK YOU!

Appendix B

What 'Makes' an Expatriate Living in Cayman?



Kindly answer all the questions below (it will only take ten minutes, if that! ☺) and return to Christopher A. Williams (PhD candidate, University of Warwick, UK), c/o the UCCI front desk. All responses will remain anonymous.

1. How old are you?
 - a. 15 to 25
 - b. 26 to 40
 - c. Above 40
2. What is your nationality?
 - a. American
 - b. Jamaican
3. How long have you been living in the Cayman Islands?
 - a. under 7 years
 - b. over 7 years
4. In which sector do you work?
 - a. Civil service sector
 - b. Financial sector
 - c. Industry sector
 - d. Domestic sector
 - e. Private contractor

If you do not work in any of these sectors, please specify.....
5. Do you enjoy living in the Cayman Islands?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

If you answered yes to question 5, what do you like about living in the Cayman Islands?

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If you answered no to question 5, what don't you like about living in the Cayman Islands?

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.....

6. Do you think that racism exists in Cayman?

- a. Yes
- b. No

7. If yes, have you ever, in your opinion, been treated unfairly because of your skin colour?

- a. Yes
- b. No

8. If you answered either yes or no to question 6, was there ever a time, in your opinion, when you were unfairly treated because you were a foreign-national?

- a. Yes
- b. No

If you would like to elaborate on either questions 7 or 8, briefly do so in the space provided below (this section is optional).

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9. As a foreign national yourself, which of the following foreign-nationals do you think have been singled out and treated unfairly? Circle as many options as may apply.

- a. Filipinos b. Jamaicans c. Hondurans d. Indians e. Canadians f. Americans (US citizens)
- g. other..... h. None of the above

10. Which of the above foreign-national groups, if any, have painted their culture or way of life in Cayman in a largely negative way? Briefly, in what ways have they done this?

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11. Which of the following characteristics, if any, are distinctly Caymanian?

- a. Caymanians tend to be proud and entitled
- b. Caymanians are usually friendly
- c. Caymanians tend to dislike foreigners
- d. Other

characteristic/s.....
.....

- e. None of the above

12. In what ways could the social relationship between foreign national and Caymanian in the Cayman Islands be improved?

.....
.....

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.....
.....

THANK YOU!

Appendix C

Christopher Williams's Journal Entry 3, September 12, 2008

What really makes me a Caymanian?

- I have Caymanian relatives
- I have Caymanian status
- I have lived in Cayman for most of my life
- I operate within the local culture (I am intimately associated with it)
- I care about the islands' wellbeing, especially in social, economic and cultural terms

But, much of my ancestry is from Jamaica; does this challenge my very Caymanianness? Does this cancel out the fact of my essential Caymanianness as I and others understand it? Am I therefore a mere Paper Caymanian? How do established Caymanians see me?

- Most that I know have embraced me as a "real" Caymanian; they have asserted that I have the best interests of the Cayman Islands at heart, so that makes me a Caymanian. A friend of mine made it clear that being Caymanian in the present is not so much about being born and having ancestral roots in Cayman, as it is about seeing Cayman as home; How do I unravel this 'Cayman as home' concept? I wonder if my friend took into consideration the historical underpinning of this concept? In other words, being Caymanian, for me, has a great deal to do with one's ancestry and the ways in which that ancestry has sought to keep the past alive—this potential link between past and present should foreground Caymanianness from a traditional point of view. Traditional thought therefore becomes very important when striving to answer questions surrounding Caymanianness. Yet something continues to bother me: If the likes of me, as a "Jamaican", can "imagine" the Caymanian experience of old, how legitimate is my imagination in this regard?
- Other Caymanians have been quick to point out that I am a Paper Caymanian, stressing that my blood line comes from elsewhere. When some of them found out that I was doing a study about Caymanianness, they were quick to ask me: 'What qualifies you to do this?' I was tempted to use Gad Heuman as an example. Heuman was not born in Jamaica, yet his love and passion for Jamaican history, together with his intellectual abilities, indeed gives him the right to write about Jamaican history; given the great sense of entitlement which accompanied this "Caymanian question", I quickly realized that my talk of Heuman would have fallen on deaf ears. The point here is that, for these Caymanians I am a foreigner, therefore how can I effectively write about Caymanian culture? My designation as foreigner, for them, cancels out the fact that I grew up here and that I have established Caymanian relatives...I am indeed seen as part of the foreign problem. Yet in my opinion, I am uniquely suited to write about Caymanian culture, for, on the one hand, I was raised here which automatically makes me a participant in Caymanian culture; yet on the other, by virtue of my perceived foreignness, I am also POTENTIALLY able to write from an outsider, observer perspective. Goodness, that "potentially" needs considerable unpacking!

Appendix D

Personal Interview Transcription Sample (Interview conducted on October 12, 2008)

Christopher Williams: Ok. Ok, now as a follow-on from that, ah, in your book, you make the claim that historical Cayman society was not (interruption). Yeah, you say that Cayman was not necessarily—historical Cayman—was not necessarily a slave society, but a society with slaves. Could you clarify the distinction there?

Roy Bodden: Right, ah, well by definition I make slave societies out to be those societies which the slaves significantly outnumbered the free people—freed people, being significantly the white people.

CW: Ok.

RB: The masters

CW: Mmm hmm.

RB: So, if we take that as a definition, we will see that Jamaica, Barbados, St. Vincent—all these other islands—were slave societies.

CW: Ok.

RB: If we take the instance of the Cayman Islands for example, in the heyday of slavery, there were not more than—more than—200 slaves over the number of—of the people—

CW: Ok.

RB: White people and freed people in the society, so—

CW: The—they [slaves] did not constitute a —

RB: Yes, yes.

CW: – major majority

RB: Yes, that's correct, that's correct—so, that's the reason why I say it [Cayman] was not, strictly speaking, a slave society, but rather a society of slaves.

CW: Ok. Ah, I will take you to task here for just a bit. In her definition of slave societies, Elsa Goveia says that, basically, a slave society exists where you have masters, slaves and freedmen. So, in that sense, would you not consider Cayman more so a slave society than a society with slaves?

Declaration of Permission

I,, hereby give Ph.D. student Christopher A. Williams permission to use any and all information I have given in this interview.

Kindly tick the appropriate response:

- I wish not to have my name publicized in accompaniment with this interview
- You may use my name in any article in which this interview will appear.

Respondent's signature:.....

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